

MAKERS
OF
THE BIBLE

HERMON H. SEVERN



Division BS445
Section .S49



MAKERS OF THE BIBLE

MAKERS OF THE BIBLE

AND

THEIR LITERARY METHODS

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To
My Wife
Ella Smith Goodrich Severn

PREFACE

This little manual is intended for young people and others who may desire some information from the modern point of view about the processes through which the Bible has come down to us today. The author hopes by it to help his readers to an intelligent comprehension of how the Bible has come to be what it is and so to a sound basis for faith in the Book of Life. The work has grown out of experience in college classroom and teacher-training classes in church and Sunday school. It is designed to serve two purposes: (1) The book may be used as a guide for independent study. Those who so use it will work through the outlines by means of the references and some of the briefer articles listed before reading the discussions in the following chapters. For this study a copy of the American Standard Version (with references) should be used, as the marginal notes and variations in this edition of the Bible are of great value. (2) The book may be read as a narrative, without regard to the study outlines and helps, and so become simply a brief story of the making of our Bible.

Feeling that people at large are entitled to any evidence that bears on the problem of the Bible the author has ventured to include in an appendix a few brief selections

Preface

from various important materials that have to do with the subject. In the selections from the Septuagint he has endeavored to make the translation, even at the expense of elegance and English idiom, reflect as far as possible not only the flavor of the Greek itself but also the value of the version as a source of information about the Bible.

Grateful acknowledgment is here made of a manifest indebtedness to the many scholars who have worked in this field. But especially does the author desire to record the debt he owes to his teachers, Professors Burton and Goodspeed, of the University of Chicago, not only for the inspiration of the classroom in earlier days, but also for personal interest in, and definite suggestions for, the present work. To President Stetson, of this College, also, is a special debt of thanks due for his great kindness in reading the manuscript and for help all the way along. Likewise to Rev. Daniel G. Stevens, Ph. D., Book Editor of the American Baptist Publication Society, the author is indebted for much more than a professional interest in the work. He has not only spared no pains to give the book an attractive form, but has helped with constructive suggestions at many points.

HERMON H. SEVERN.

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE, January 3, 1922.

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MAKERS OF THE BIBLE

I

WHAT IS THE BIBLE? THE PROBLEM

Study Outline

1. Study the titles of the Biblical books, and ask yourself whether they emphasize the unity of the Bible or its diversity.

2. Examine the different kinds of literature in the Bible and classify them into history, poetry, prophecy, etc. What is your impression of the Bible as to the unity or diversity of its writings?

3. Read some encyclopedia or Bible dictionary articles on the languages of the Bible, and ask yourself whether the diversity of the Scriptures suggested above extends to its languages.

4. Study carefully such passages as 1 Samuel 15 : 3 and 19 : 9; 1 Kings 22; Matthew 6 : 9 and 14; Luke 15 : 11-32; Hebrews 12 : 7, and state whether the Bible seems diverse to you in its ethical standards.

5. Look up in any good encyclopedia the history of the word Bible, and state what light it sheds on the character of the Bible as a collection of books.

Scripture References and Helps

Judges 5; 2 Peter 3 : 15f.; Daniel 2 : 4 to 7 : 28; 9 : 2; Ezra 4 : 8 to 6 : 18; Jeremiah 10 : 11; Isaiah 7 :

14; Matthew 1 : 1, 23; 6 : 8, 9, 14; 7 : 11; 1 Samuel 15 : 3; 19 : 9; 2 Samuel 6 : 6 (marg.), 7; 1 Kings 22; John 17 : 3; Romans 2 : 2, 6; 2 Timothy 4 : 8, 14; Hebrews 12 : 7, 23; Acts 17 : 28; Luke 15 : 11-32; Mark 10 : 18; 2 Corinthians 4 : 7.

Prologue to Ecclesiasticus; 1 Maccabees 1 : 56; 12 : 9; 2 Epistle of Clement 14 : 2.

Hastings, "Dictionary of Bible" (1 vol. ed.), art. "Acrostic," p. 7; art. "Bible," §1, p. 95; §§3, 4, pp. 96, 97; art. "Text, Versions, Languages of the Old Testament," §§1-6, pp. 908, 909, and §40, pp. 915f.; art. "God," pp. 299-303.

"Standard Bible Dictionary," art. "Bible," §§1-4, pp. 98-100; art. "Hebrew Language," pp. 324-326; art. "Poetry," pp. 682-684.

Nelson's "Encyclopedia," art. "Bible," "Canon of Old Testament," pp. 68f.; and "The New Testament," p. 70.

Moulton and Others, "The Bible as Literature," Intro., pp. ix-xviii; and I, pp. 3-11.

Wood and Grant, "The Bible as Literature," Intro., pp. 13-17.

What is the Bible? Is it a single book or a collection of books? Or, is it many in one, a collection of books which has so impressed our English-speaking world with its singleness of purpose as to have won recognition as a unit? It may, perhaps, be admitted that for English literature the Bible is a single book,¹ but when we enter upon the historical study of the Scriptures, the individuality of the different writings attracts and holds the attention. The titles of the books, in themselves a mark

¹ Gardiner, "The Bible as Literature," New York, 1910, p. 2.

of diversity, suggest the variety of books included in the volume. Some designate the author, as "According to Luke," "The Book of Ezekiel"; others name the hero or heroine, "The Book of Ruth," "The Book of Daniel"; still others seem to be indicative of the character of the book, as "The First Book of the Chronicles," "The Acts." So one might continue with the rest of the titles and deepen a superficial impression of the diversity of the Biblical writings.

And this first impression of variety in the books of the Bible is confirmed by examination of the different types of literature found in the Scriptures. The usual classification of these Biblical books into history, poetry, prophecy, and epistles has served to popularize somewhat the designation of the Bible as the Library of Sixty-six Books. Yet it is only within comparatively recent years that we have come to anything like an adequate appreciation of the immense variety of the different parts of this unique literature. There are proverbs, psalms, chronicles. We find sermons, such as the messages of Isaiah in the Old Testament and the book of James in the New. Biographies like the Books of Samuel and the Gospels, soaring visions like Daniel and Revelation, and the impassioned arguments of a Paul in Romans are all present. In fact, so diverse are the books of the Bible in character as to defy grouping according to the recognized canons of literary classification.² In the New Testament the book of Hebrews does not sound just like a letter, much of the prophecy of the Old Testament is poetic in form, and large sections of the so-called historical books are laws rather than histories. The truth of the matter seems to be that this Biblical literature is

² Barton, "Biblical World," April, 1914, pp. 251-257.

a composite of materials of different kinds from widely separated periods woven together into its present form.

And this diversity of the Bible extends to the languages in which it was originally written and the period of its composition. The earliest materials embodied in the Old Testament reach back to the time of Israel's emergence from the nomadic stage of life. For instance, the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5) is generally regarded by scholars as one of the very earliest examples of Hebrew poetry. It is a real triumph-song, celebrating the great victory of the Israelites over the Canaanites. And in the New Testament the latest books extend down to the end of the first century A. D., if not to the middle of the second century. Second Peter seems to look back upon Paul as belonging to an earlier period of the church, far enough back to allow time for the making of a collection of Paul's letters which has been raised by the time of the writer of Second Peter to the level of the other Scriptures. (2 Peter 3 : 15f.) But taking the shortest interval for the production of the Biblical writings, we get at least a millennium, more nearly a period of twelve or thirteen hundred years.

And the original languages of the Bible too are quite sharply distinguished. The Old Testament is written in Hebrew, except some small portions in Aramaic, like Daniel 2 : 4 to 7 : 28, where the new language is introduced by the phrase, "in the Syrian language" (marg., "Or, in Aramaic"); Ezra 4 : 8 to 6 : 18, and Jer. 10 : 11. The language of the New Testament is Greek, for the most part the thought-vehicle of the common people of the day, not the literary usage of a few cultured writers. And of course this Greek of the New Testament differs from the Hebrew of the Old Testament both in vocabu-

lary and sentence structure. Furthermore, this diversity of languages in the Bible extends for us to the English tongue. We face the difficulties of a translation. Translators generally feel these and, like the Greek translator of the Aramaic Wisdom of Sirach, otherwise known as Ecclesiasticus, ask the indulgence of their readers for failure to do full justice to the phrases of the original. "Things originally spoken in Hebrew have not the same force in them, when they are translated into another tongue" (Prologue, Ecclesiasticus). The translators of the King James Version also recognized the same fact:

There be many words in the Scriptures, which be neuer found there but once (hauing neither brother nor neighbour, as the Hebrewes speake) so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Againe, there be many rare names of certaine birds, beastes, and precious stones, &c., concerning which the Hebrewes themselves are so diuided among themselves for iudgment, that they may seeme to haue defined this or that, rather because they would say something, thē because they were sure of that which they said.⁸

Sometimes the difficulty of finding an adequate rendering for an original word has led translators into errors which have proved momentous. Such an instance, apparently, is to be found in the term translated "virgin" in Isaiah 7 : 14. The Septuagint translators failed to catch the meaning of the Hebrew word and so rendered it virgin. In this form it is quoted in Matthew 1 : 23, and has been a prime support for one of the great doctrines of the Christian church. But both Christian and Jewish scholars today do not so understand the word, and in the latest Jewish version of the Old Testament in

⁸ The Authorized Version of the Bible, in "Cambridge Classics," Vol. I, Preface, p. 27.

English ⁴ Isaiah's term is actually translated "the young woman."

Once more, this diversity of the Bible extends to its ethical standards. In the Old Testament God is sometimes pictured as being vindictive, and morally irresponsible. He incites Saul against David (1 Sam. 19 : 9) and through his prophet commands the king to "smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep" (1 Sam. 15 : 3). He breaks out in a fit of anger upon what seems to us a slight occasion. When the ark was being moved up to Jerusalem, the oxen drawing the cart became restive (2 Sam. 6 : 6 marg.), and there was danger that it would topple off. Uzzah, apparently with the sole intention of preventing such a catastrophe, stretched forth his hand to steady it, "and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error (marg., rashness); and there he died by the ark of God" (2 Sam. 6 : 6f.). Even the moral responsibility for the lie which brought about the death of Ahab is charged upon the Almighty. (1 Kings 22 : 20-22.) In this twenty-second chapter of First Kings Jehovah is represented as having decided to procure the death of the odious Israelitish king. In order to carry out this purpose he commissions "a lying spirit" to go out from divine presence and so control the utterances of the four hundred prophets as to make them urge upon Ahab a course of action which will result in his death. The prophets cannot help themselves. They are represented as inspired by Jehovah to tell the lie that will accomplish the divine purpose. (1 Kings 22.)

Not such, however, is the New Testament conception

⁴ "The Holy Scriptures," Philadelphia, 1917.

of God. He is "the only true God" (John 17 : 3), whose "judgment is according to truth" (Rom. 2 : 2), and "who will render to every man according to his works" (Rom. 2 : 6). He is the righteous judge of all (2 Tim. 4 : 8 and Heb. 12 : 23) and the one in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17 : 28). Nay, God deals with men as with sons, even though at times he chastises. (Heb. 12 : 7.) He is in fact the Father, who "knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him" (Matt. 6 : 8), more ready to give good things than an earthly parent. (Matt. 7 : 11.) True, as Jesus suggests, the Father is strict with his children when necessary, requiring them to observe the obligations of the kingdom if they desire its blessing. (Matt. 6 : 14.) On the other hand, he is ever ready to welcome back the returning prodigal who comes back truly repentant. (Luke 15 : 11-32.) In brief, he is the good God (Mark 10 : 18), our Father. (Matt. 6 : 9).

At first puzzling, if not disturbing, this diversity of the Scriptures in time and contents and ethical standards becomes intelligible and even helpful when we come to appreciate, even to a slight degree, the changes through which the Bible has come down to us. This process is suggested by the history of the very name Bible. The term comes to us through the Latin from the Greek word *biblos* (or *bublos*). This Greek term was used at first to designate the pith of the papyrus stalk, from which the common writing material of antiquity was made. Then the word was applied to writings placed upon rolls or books composed of this material. "The book (*biblos*) of the birth (R. V., marg.) of Jesus Christ" (Matt. 1 : 1) is a good illustration of a birth-register written upon this material. Practically the same form of the

word occurs in the Greek version of Daniel 9 : 2, where the writer is searching for and finding in the books (bibles) some information about the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation declared by Jeremiah of old. This expression is unique in that the word is in the plural and implies the existence of a somewhat definite collection of sacred writings.

The more common form of the word, however, as a designation for books at this early time was the neuter plural of a diminutive from the same root, a form we transliterate as *biblia*. This is the form of the word in the Greek prologue to the apocryphal book called the Wisdom of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, where the writer distinguishes the different parts of the Jewish Scriptures as "the law, and the prophets, and the rest of the ancestral books" (bibles). Again in First Maccabees this form of the word appears with similar significance, "the sacred books" (*biblia*), and "the *biblia* of the law" (1 Macc. 12 : 9 and 1 : 56).

The same word is found in the New Testament in an interesting connection. Paul seems to have left at Troas at one time some things which later, when a prisoner, he desired very much. So he asked Timothy to bring the articles. (2 Tim. 4 : 13.) They were his cloak, the books (*biblia*), and the parchments. What did Paul mean by the *biblia* and the parchments? Some apply his words simply to his books and his papers.⁵ In this case *biblia* would not apply to the Old Testament books. Others, however, have felt that the apostle here marks a distinction between manuscripts of the Old Testament and his own notes, or writings, on papyrus, which he "re-

⁵ Jordan, Hastings' "Dictionary of Apost. Church," II, art. "Writing," p. 701.

garded as of little importance compared with the 'parchments,' copies of certain portions of the Old Testament Scriptures."⁶

Another occurrence of the word is found in a second century Christian homily, or sermon. In speaking of the meaning of membership in the church and the pre-existent character of that which is spiritual the author uses these words: "And moreover the books and the apostles declare that the church belongs not to the present, but has existed from the beginning" (Second Clement 14 : 2). "The books" and "the apostles" are apparently designations of Old Testament and New Testament writings respectively. If so, then here again "books" (*biblia*) is used of the Jewish Scriptures. So also somewhat later in the second century Melito, bishop of Sardis, uses the word in the same sense:⁷ "Having learned accurately the books (*biblia*) of the Old Covenant I send them to you herewith subjoined." And less than a hundred years later the great scholar of the early church, Origen, used a form of the same term with similar reference to the books of the Old Testament: "And it is not to be ignored that the canonical books (*biblous*), as the Hebrews hand them down, are twenty-two."⁸ It is asserted that, in his commentary on John, Origen again uses the word (*biblia*) of a collection which includes the New Testament books.⁹ If this be so, then it appears to be the first instance of the term with anything like the significance it came to have later as applying to the whole Bible.

At some time this Greek plural *biblia* was taken over

⁶ Milligan, "New Testament Documents," p. 20.

⁷ Cf. Goodspeed, "*Die Ältesten Apologeten*," p. 309.

⁸ Quoted by Eusebius, "Church History," VI, 25, 1.

⁹ Murray, "New English Dictionary," I, under "Bible."

into Latin; probably at first with its plural force. In this form it would not be a perfectly clear designation for the Scriptures. At any rate, Jerome, the translator of the Vulgate, at the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth, used the unambiguous term *bibliotheca divina*, "divine library," to emphasize the library-character of the Bible. But in the course of time the Latin plural became a singular noun, a change not uncommon in the history of the Latin language so far as other words are concerned. And such a change would be applied the more easily to a word like *biblia* as men came to regard the Biblical writings as one work. Just how early this took place it is impossible to say, but by the fourteenth century the word is found in English in the singular, taken over from a singular Latin noun, and applied to any sort of book. Then it is readily applied to the Bible when English writers reflect the Scriptures as a unit. Thus a word originally plural has been made over into a singular, and the expression The Bible has come to obscure in many minds the fundamental character of these Scriptures as a collection of writings. Hence the Bible in the light of its growth and the history of its name reveals itself to us as a collection of books written out of human life to life, tried out and gathered together in the light of life's needs, and bringing a life-message in all times and to men of all walks and conditions of life.

The need, therefore, today in the realm of Bible study is for a better understanding and appreciation of the origins of our present Biblical writings, if we are to catch the meaning of the different writers in the circumstances under which their works were produced. If the Bible is so various in its different parts, the messages of the dif-

ferent writers must be evaluated in the light of the circumstances and occasions that produced them. This means that we need a wider historical study of the Bible in the present generation, if we are to apply the Biblical teaching successfully to our modern conditions.

There are two phases to such historical Bible study, an outer and an inner. The latter consists in an attempt to study a book of the Bible for knowledge of its author, readers, date, circumstances of its origin, and course of its thought. The former may be termed the more fundamental or preliminary task of becoming familiar with the literary background of the Bible, the materials and methods of early writing, the circulation and collection of the writings, and the processes through which they have passed, both translational and textual, to reach their present form. Applying an expression of Paul's to the Bible, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4 : 7). In the following chapters the effort will be to learn something of the externals of the making of our Bible, in the hope that such knowledge will lead to a better appreciation of its great teachings and its great Teacher, Jesus the Christ.

II

PRE-BIBLICAL WRITERS: THE LOST BOOKS

Study Outline

1. Find in your Bible as many occurrences of the word "book" as you can, noting among others Genesis 5 : 1; Isaiah 29 : 11; Luke 4 : 17. What suggestions of the early use of books do you find in this study?

2. In the Bible there are reflections of what may be termed "lost books," such as Joshua 10 : 12f. and 1 Corinthians 5 : 9. Find as many of these as possible, and try to form an opinion of the character of these lost writings.

3. Read the books of Kings and Chronicles and make lists of all the "lost books" there reflected. Estimate how many different books these are, and show how they were used by the writers of our Kings and Chronicles.

4. On the basis of such passages as Numbers 23 : 7-10 and 1 Timothy 3 : 16 find as many poetical fragments in the Bible as you can, and tell how they serve the purposes of different Biblical writers.

5. Commit to memory Luke's preface (Luke 1 : 1-4), and elicit from it what information it gives on the Evangelist's attitude toward earlier Gospel traditions and documents, and his purpose in writing.

6. State briefly your ideas of the significance of this background literature for one's conception of the Bible.

7. How does this discovery of the use of sources by Biblical writers affect your conception of the Bible?

Scripture References and Helps

Ecclesiastes 12 : 12; Numbers 21 : 14, 17f., 27-30; Judges 5; Joshua 10 : 12f.; 2 Samuel 1 : 17f., 19-27; 1 Kings 11 : 41; 14 : 19, and other corresponding references; 2 Kings 1 : 18, and other corresponding references; 1 Chronicles 9 : 1; 27 : 24; 29 : 29; 2 Chronicles 9 : 29, etc.; 1 Samuel 10 : 25; 1 Kings 4 : 32f.; Genesis 4 : 23f.; Exodus 15 : 1-18; Numbers 23 : 7-10, 18-24; 24 : 3-9, 15-24.

1 Corinthians 5 : 9; 7 : 1; 15 : 3; 13 : 2; 2 Corinthians 2 : 4; 7 : 8f.; Philippians 4 : 15f.; 2 : 25; 4 : 18; Colossians 4 : 16; 3 : 16; Acts 18 : 27; 16 : 25; 20 : 35; Romans 16 : 1; 2 Corinthians 3 : 2; 11 : 26f.; Matthew 26 : 30; 24 : 43; 21 : 21; 1 : 1; Ephesians 5 : 19; 5 : 14; 1 Timothy 3 : 16; 2 Thessalonians 2 : 15; Luke 1 : 1-4; 1 Thessalonians 5 : 4; Mark 11 : 23.

Driver, "Introduction to Literature of Old Testament," rev. ed., pp. 186-189 and 527-532.

Hunting, "Story of Our Bible," pp. 1-20 and 81-89.

Hastings and Standard Bible dictionaries, arts. "Jashar," "Wars of Jehovah."

Burton, "Short Introduction to the Gospels," pp. 80-98.

Robinson, "Life of Paul," pp. 164-174.

Goodspeed, "Story of the New Testament," pp. 36-39, 60f., 100f., 121-123.

Souter, "Text and Canon of the New Testament," pp. 149-151.

The word book is not uncommon in the English Bible. It represents at least three different words of the original Hebrew and Greek in six or seven variant forms and

occurs in both the earlier and later portions of the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. The frequent references to books, histories, records, letters, and booklets not now extant suggest that there must have been at times in circulation among the Jews and early Christians many more "books" than have come down to us in this Bible; so many more that the writer of Ecclesiastes could complain of the endless making of books in his day and the utter weariness of much study. (Eccl. 12 : 12.)

And this first impression of what may be called the Bible's background literature is confirmed by a search of its pages for reflections of such writings. To begin with, there are at least two "lost books" quoted by name in the Old Testament. The first is mentioned in Numbers 21 : 14, where a fragmentary verse of poetry is quoted from the "Book of the Wars of Jehovah" describing the advance of ancient Israel when opposed by the Amorites at the river Arnon. The Israelites were victorious in the struggle, and perhaps some unknown bard celebrated the victory in song. Later the historian found this bit of ancient poetry and incorporated it in his record of the victorious onward march of his people in their early conquests. After the people had passed on to Be-er, Moses was directed to assemble them to receive water as a gift from Jehovah. This was an auspicious event in the course of Israel's progress and was in all likelihood marked by the composition of a spirited song, part of which has been incorporated by our writer in his narrative, perhaps from the same "Book of the Wars of Jehovah." Hear them as they sing about the well, exulting in the discovery of refreshing water, which they accept as a gift from their leaders:

“ Spring up, O Well ; sing ye unto it :
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved,
With the sceptre, and with their staves ”

(Num. 21 : 17f.).

Still farther on in this journey of conquest the continued success of Israel's hosts in conflict with Moabites and Amorites was celebrated again in an ode of triumph, popularized perhaps by reciters and readers who are characterized as “ they who speak in proverbs ” (Num. 21 : 27). And this ode, or part of it, has been preserved to us by our book of Numbers, shall we say from the same “ Book of the Wars of Jehovah ”?

“ Come ye to Heshbon ;
Let the city of Sihon be built and established :
For a fire is gone out of Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon :
It hath devoured Ar of Moab,
The Lords of the high places of the Arnon.
Woe to thee, Moab !
Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh :
He hath given his sons as fugitives,
And his daughters into captivity,
Unto Sihon king of the Amorites.
We have shot at them ; Heshbon is perished even
unto Dibon,
And we have laid waste even unto Nophah,
Which reacheth unto Medeba ” (Num. 21 : 27-30).

It is not certain, of course, that these three fragments are parts of a single poem. They may be merely frag-

ments of different poems from a single book, or even from different books. But even so, they suggest the early existence of collections of songs celebrating the brave deeds of the chosen people under the leadership of their God. The poems are rugged and vigorous, soul-stirring pæans of victory, and take rank with Deborah's martial ode in the fifth chapter of the book of Judges. Indeed, it is just possible that this remarkable song, "unsurpassed in Hebrew literature in all the great qualities of poetry,"¹ belonged originally to the same noteworthy collection of songs as these three fragments, written and sung for the glorification of a people's heroes at a time when the tribes were emerging into something suggestive of national self-consciousness under the leadership of Jehovah the God of battles. And the title *Book of the Wars of Jehovah* would be a good name for such a collection of war-ballads.

The second "lost book" distinctly quoted by name in the Old Testament is mentioned in two places. The first is in Joshua 10 : 12f. The tenth chapter of this book gives the account of the capture of southern Canaan. The first section of this narrative is the story of Joshua's defeat of the five Amorite kings who had formed a league against Gibeon, whence the doughty leader of the Israelites drove the allied kings by Beth-horon to Azekah and Makkedah. Verse 16 is the logical continuation of verse 11 in that story, while verses 12-15 break this thread of connection and constitute an insertion from a different source. They are thus in themselves a short paragraph, in the midst of which stands this fragment of poetry from the *Book of Jashar*. The word *Jashar* means "upright one," and so the quotation may possibly

¹ Moore, "Inter. Crit. Com. on Judges," p. 135.

be taken from an ancient record of the deeds of righteous men, though this is a rather precarious inference. More likely, as in the case of the Book of the Wars of Jehovah, this Book of Jashar was a collection of poems celebrating the early heroes of the Hebrew people and their achievements in war. In this instance the quotation is assigned to Joshua himself:

“Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon.
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the nation had avenged themselves of their
enemies.”

A second mention of this rare old book is more enlightening, even if in a passage of greater difficulty. It is found in 2 Samuel 1 : 17f., followed by a somewhat lengthy excerpt from the book itself. “And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son (and he bade them teach the children of Judah the song of the bow: behold, it is written in the book of Jashar).” The dirge, or lamentation, following in verses 19-27, shows plainly that the book of which it was part was one of real artistic and literary beauty. Kent writes of the poem as follows: ²

The artistic beauty of the poem is unsurpassed. It opens with a stanza in the quick two-beat measure, which rises in the second stanza to the three-beat, and in the third to the four-beat measure, which is maintained throughout the song, until the last refrain is introduced, giving the effect of a final sob.

Here is Kent's translation of this sweetly solemn song:

² “Founders and Rulers of United Israel,” *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, p. 119.

“ Weep, O Judah!
Grieve, O Israel!
On thy heights are the slain!
How the mighty have fallen!

Tell it not in Philistine Gath,
Declare it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, may no dew descend,
Nor rain upon you, O ye fields of death!
For there was the shield of the mighty thrown down,
The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the
mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back.
The sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the lovely!
In life and in death they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger
than lions.

Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you daintily in finest linen,
Golden ornaments he placed on your garments,
How the mighty have fallen in the midst of battle!

Jonathan, in thy death me thou hast wounded!
O Jonathan, my brother, for thee I'm in anguish,
To me thou wert surpassingly dear,
Thy love were far more than the love of woman!

How the mighty have fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!"

(Historical Bible, II, p. 117f.)

This Book of Jashar has given rise to a large and varied literature and to many speculations about the character and contents of the interesting old lost book. We must content ourselves here with just the inference that as the passages quoted in Joshua and Second Samuel are fragments of poems in praise of ancient heroes and early events the book was in all probability a collection of such poems, much like the Book of the Wars of Jehovah.³ Whatever the character and contents of this lost collection, it does tell us that at an early time in Israel books were in process of formation, and were later referred to as sources of inspiration and information by those writers who gave form to the books of our present Bible.

There are in the next place several lost books in the Old Testament, either simply referred to by name or mentioned as the source from which the narrator draws his information. The first explicit mention of such a work seems to be in 1 Kings 11 : 41, where the historian gives the Book of the Acts of Solomon as the source of information about Solomon and the events of his reign. In similar fashion, when writing his story of the divided kingdom, he appears to have access to at least two political histories which were based upon annals, or royal chronicles. These histories he calls the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah. These two well-written accounts, accessible to those who cared

³ Cf. Bennett, in Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. II, art. "Jashar."

to read them, as his formula of reference suggests, he reflects some thirty times or more from 1 Kings 14 : 19 to 2 Kings 24 : 5. A somewhat similar, though more confusing, reflection of sources is found in First and Second Chronicles. The chronicler has an imposing array of some twenty references to sources, as 1 Chronicles 9 : 1; 27 : 24; 29 : 29; and 2 Chronicles 9 : 29; and here and there to the end. But these citations in all probability reflect only two or three independent sources upon which he drew.⁴

In addition to these lost books so clearly reflected in the pages of the Old Testament, there are mere statements about others which are otherwise unknown. Such, for instance, are the proverbs and songs of Solomon about plants and animals (1 Kings 4 : 32f.) and the work by Samuel on the kingdom. (1 Sam. 10 : 25.) There are also reflections of fragments of poetry taken from unnamed early writings. The song of Lamech may be such a bit. (Gen. 4 : 23f.) The song of Moses and the children of Israel is a fairly representative piece of Israel's ancient folk-songs (Exod. 15 : 1-18), while even more interesting and suggestive are the Balaam songs in the book of Numbers. (Num. 23 : 7-10, 18-24, and 24 : 3-9, 15-24.)

The same phenomena appear in the New Testament. Let us begin with Paul. Of course we shall not expect to find him using "lost books" as sources, for he is writing letters. But it will soon be seen that he wrote more letters than have been preserved in the New Testament. For instance, in the present First Corinthians he says that he had written once before to his Christian friends in Corinth

⁴ Cf. Driver, "Literature of the Old Testament," rev. ed., p. 527ff., and McFadyen, "Intro. to the Old Testament," p. 353ff.

telling them not to associate with immoral people. (1 Cor. 5 : 9.) This of itself shows that he wrote more than twice to the Corinthian church, and the phenomena of the two letters in their present form suggest the possibility of five or six letters to that church. Paul had not only received and answered a letter from Corinth about certain religious and social practises (1 Cor. 7 : 1), but in addition thereto seems to have written a "painful" letter, which for a time he regretted and then later felt satisfied with, when he learned that it had finally produced good results. (2 Cor. 2 : 4 and 7 : 8f.) Practically the same situation confronts us in the letter to the Philippians. If Paul was courteous enough to acknowledge gifts sent to him at different times by friends, and if the messenger who brought the gift could carry back a letter of acknowledgment, then the apostle may easily have written to his first European church at least four times before sending them this immortal letter; twice from Thessalonica (Phil. 4 : 16), once from Corinth (Phil. 4 : 15), and once from Rome on the arrival of Epaphroditus from Philippi with the church's contribution to the needs of their beloved missionary.⁵ (Phil. 2 : 25 and 4 : 18.) What those lost letters contained we have no means of knowing. The Philippians do not seem to have prized those earlier letters enough to preserve them. Perhaps the same fate overtook the famous lost "Laodicean letter" (Col. 4 : 16), unless, as some Christians in both ancient and modern times have believed, this lost letter is to be identified with that New Testament writing entitled "To the Ephesians." But in spite of this apparent neglect of Paul's letters by the early church, Paul himself as a man has come into his own in the appreciation of the modern

⁵ Cf. Goodspeed, "Story of the New Testament," p. 39.

church. For we not only admire his power to organize and train a corps of workers like Timothy, Silas, Luke, and the rest, but also are grateful for his wonderful ability to produce such immortal letters as these that constitute so large a part of our New Testament, remembering that his missionary activity fell within a comparatively short period of about twenty-five years and covered a goodly portion of Asia Minor and southeastern Europe as far west as Rome, if not Spain; that the burden of anxiety for all the churches and the opposition of probably sincere but misguided "false brothers" pressed heavily upon him; that his daily life was one of toil for self-support in addition to the work of evangelization; that he was often "in danger from rivers and robbers, from Jews and Gentiles, through many a sleepless night, through hunger and thirst, starving many a time, cold and ill-clad, and all the rest of it" (condensed from Moffatt's translation of 2 Cor. 11 : 26f.)

Not only, however, was individual letter-writing practised among early Christians on a larger scale than is now commonly supposed, but there is also evidence which intimates that the custom of official letter-writing had begun in the Apostolic Age. In the book of Acts (18 : 27) we find mention of a letter written by one church to another, representing what may be designated as the official literary activity of the early church. At the end of the first century the church in Rome, through one of its members, wrote to the church in Corinth on the question of Christian conduct, and that letter has been preserved as First Clement in the Apostolic Fathers. In a somewhat similar fashion the church in Ephesus writes to the brethren in Achaia on behalf of Apollos. This Christian teacher, a cultured native of Alexandria, having finished

his work in Ephesus, wished to go over to Achaia. So a letter was written in his behalf to prepare a welcome for him and to introduce him to the Christians there. One wonders whether this was simply a letter of commendation or a more formal letter, the forerunner of the modern church letter. Perhaps it combined both features. If it was the former, is it to be classed with Paul's letter commending Phœbe to Ephesus, now appearing as part of the sixteenth chapter of Romans (Rom. 16 : 1)? It can scarcely have been one of those "commendatory letters" that roused the apostle's ire and drew forth his caustic question indignantly repudiating the practise of "some" in this respect. (2 Cor. 3 : 1.)

In the next place, as there are psalms and fragments of songs in the Old Testament, so we are led to look for suggestions of Christian hymns in the New Testament. Early Christian writers of the centuries immediately following the Apostolic Age make it clear that hymns formed an important part of the services of the primitive church. There are in the New Testament itself reflections of the same practise. For when Jesus had finished the supper with his disciples, before going out to the Mount of Olives they sang a hymn (Matt. 26 : 30), probably chanting a part of the so-called Hallel. Paul and Silas found themselves fast in the stocks at midnight in the Philippian jail and comforted one another with prayer and hymn-singing. (Acts 16 : 25.) And when the apostle wanted the Colossians to drive out revelings and drunken riotings, he suggested that they do it by occupying themselves with "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," singing and making melody to the Lord from the heart (Col. 3 : 16), the same injunction being repeated in the letter to the Ephesians. (Eph. 5 : 19.)

It occasions no surprise, then, to find in the pages of the New Testament what appear to be fragments of this early Christian hymnody. And right here, first, in this same Ephesians there is a bit of an ancient Christian hymn, though it is not printed in the American Standard Version in such form as to suggest its poetical character :

“Awake, thou that sleepest,
And arise from the dead ;
And the Christ shall shine upon thee ” (5 : 14).

First Timothy yields a fragment, this time printed in stanza form in our American version :

“He who was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the spirit,
Seen of angels,
Preached among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory ” (3 : 16).

Very much like this are similar lines on the nativity found in that remnant of early Christian hymnody, the so-called Odes of Solomon :

“She brought him forth openly,
And acquired him with great dignity,
And loved him in his swaddling-clothes,
And guarded him kindly,
And showed him in majesty.”⁶

So also one is tempted to feel that Luke, with an ear for the music of language, finds the beautiful songs of his

⁶ Goodspeed, in “Biblical World,” XLVI, pp. 345-347.

early chapters in the hymns of the church, while Revelation frequently casts its material into poetic form, some of which was very likely taken from hymns familiar to the Christians of the writer's age and circle.

But when search is made for reflections of "lost Gospels" there is clearer light. There are indications in the New Testament of a background of oral evangelic tradition. Paul intimates that he had "received" a body of gospel tradition and had "delivered" it to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 15 : 3.) With similar significance he bids the Thessalonians hold fast the "traditions" they had received. (2 Thess. 2 : 15.) Likewise Luke suggests the existence of a fairly well-defined body of oral tradition when he intimates that by his time a number of Gospel writers had based their works on the testimony of eyewitnesses of the facts of Jesus' life. (Luke 1 : 2.)

On the other hand, there are also reflections of written Gospel narratives. In his address to the Ephesian elders, when he tarried for them at Miletus, Paul refers to a saying of the Lord Jesus not found in our present Gospels: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20 : 35). This, with such passages as 1 Thessalonians 5 : 4 reflecting Jesus' words in Matthew 24 : 43, and 1 Corinthians 13 : 2 reflecting Matthew 21 : 21 and Mark 11 : 23, strengthens Souter's conviction that Paul had a written compendium of Jesus' teaching.⁷

Luke's preface, also, affords rather definite suggestions of early evangelic booklets upon which our present Gospels are based, at least in part. In this preface it appears that when Luke wrote he had access not only to oral tradition, as indicated above, but also to several more or less complete written narratives of the life of Jesus.

⁷ "Text and Canon of the New Testament," p. 151.

These earlier Gospel booklets were based upon oral accounts proceeding directly from personal companions of Jesus, it is true, yet in the opinion of the third Evangelist they seem to have lacked something in the way of accuracy of statement and fulness of details. Hence after careful investigation of the facts of the narrative Luke enters upon the task of providing his readers with "an entirely trustworthy record of the life of Jesus, an historical basis of faith."⁸ The same writer calls attention to the conclusion of modern scholarship that while Mark's Gospel, practically as we have it, was used by both Matthew and Luke, there were other written Gospel narratives, now lost at least in part, accessible to these Evangelists. And it is an interesting and enlightening suggestion in this connection that the use of the word "book" in Matthew 1 : 1, referring to the first seventeen verses of that Gospel, reflects such a possible booklet.⁹

Thus it appears reasonably clear that the New Testament, like the Old, has a background literature larger in content than our present "Twenty-seven Books" and of varied literary character. The Bible's "lost books" represent sources from which Biblical writers drew largely both inspiration and materials. Our Bible takes on the character of a "corpus," or deposit, of Jewish and Christian literature, and reminds us not only of those who were inspired to write, but also of those who were inspired to preserve for later ages these early materials. And this only adds to the worth of the Bible. For it means that many individuals were moved by the spirit of God to interpret afresh those ancient poems and records, and to add their own contributions, in order to show how

⁸ Burton, "Short Introduction to the Gospels," pp. 86-88.

⁹ Burton, "Short Introduction," pp. 97 and 126, with note.

God and Christ make known the divine will to men. What did these early books look like in their original form, both those lost and these preserved? On what sort of materials and with what kind of instruments were they written? How did the writers go about the actual task of putting their thoughts into written form? These and other like questions press for answer and will engage attention in the succeeding chapters.

III

THE WRITERS OF THE BIBLE

Study Outline

1. Find as many references as possible, such as Exodus 17 : 14, that reflect familiarity with the art of writing as mere ability to use a pen, noting the circumstances of each reference.

2. Find some reflections of the art of writing, such as Galatians 6 : 11 and Judges 5 : 14 margin, that suggest individual writers or classes of writers possessing ability not only to use the pen but to produce works of literary merit.

3. Trace the reflection in the Bible of the materials of writing: ink and what served for paper; and pens.

4. Make a careful study of the books of Kings and the thirty-sixth chapter of Jeremiah in the Old Testament and of Luke's preface (Luke 1 : 1-4) and Paul's earlier letters in the New Testament, and trace the reflection of the methods of accomplishing the task of reducing thought to writing, whether by direct composition on the part of the author, or by dictation.

5. Prepare a concise statement of your study of the subject of this chapter, noting the familiarity of Biblical writers with the externals of the art of writing, their ability in literature, the materials and instruments of writing, and the methods of producing written documents, and the significance of it all for one's conception of the Bible.

Scripture References and Helps

Exodus 17 : 14; 31 : 18; 34 : 1, 28; Joshua 8 : 32; 18 : 1-10; 15 : 15; Judges 8 : 14; 1 : 11; 5 : 14; 2 Samuel 11 : 14; 8 : 16f.; 20 : 23-25; 1 Kings 21 : 8; 4 : 3; 1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17; Isaiah 8 : 2; 36 : 11; 8 : 1; 37 : 14; Habakkuk 2 : 2; Jeremiah 29 : 1; 36 : 10-12, 20f.; 36 : 18; 17 : 1; 29 : 5-7; 36 : 23, 28-32; Luke 1 : 3f.; 4 : 20; Galatians 6 : 11; Revelation 1 : 4; 1 : 3; 22 : 7; 2 Kings 18 : 18, 37, 18-25; Proverbs 25 : 1; Ezekiel 9 : 2; Psalm 45 : 1; Job 19 : 24; 13 : 26; 3 Maccabees 4 : 20; 2 Corinthians 3 : 3; 4 : 7; 2 John 12; 3 John 13; Deuteronomy 27 : 2f.; Numbers 17 : 2; 5 : 23; 2 Timothy 4 : 13; Matthew 1 : 1; 1 Thessalonians 3 : 6f.; 1 Peter 5 : 12; 2 Thessalonians 3 : 17; Romans 16 : 1, 22; 1 Corinthians 1 : 14; 16 : 21; Acts 18 : 27; Colossians 4 : 18.

Milligan, "New Testament Documents," pp. 3-32.

Gregory, "Canon and Text of the New Testament," pp. 299-338.

Souter, "Text and Canon of the New Testament," pp. 3-9.

Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," pp. 20-26; 131-134.

Hunting, "Story of Our Bible," pp. 225-233.

Hastings, "Dictionary of Bible," 1 vol. ed., art. "Writing," pp. 978-981.

Hastings, "Dict. of Apost. Church," vol. II, art. "Writing," pp. 699-704.

"Standard Bible Dict.," art. "Books and Writing," pp. 106-108.

The art of writing developed early in ancient Israel, as the numerous references to books have already suggested.

The first mention of writing in the Old Testament is found at the end of the story of Israel's conflict with Amalek at Rephidim, when Moses is commanded to write in a book Jehovah's determination to blot out the hated foe. (Exod. 17 : 14.) After the conquest of Ai Joshua is said to have written upon the stones of the altar at Ebal a copy of the law of Moses. (Josh. 8 : 32.) Later, when the distribution of unoccupied territory was to be made to the seven tribes whose inheritance had not been assigned, Joshua appointed three men from each of these tribes to form an apportioning body. This commission examined the district and "described it by cities into seven portions in a book" (Josh. 18 : 1-10). A similar reflection of early familiarity with writing is found in the incident of Gideon's capture of a young man of Succoth, who "described (marg., wrote down) for him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, seventy and seven men" (Judg. 8 : 14). Instances multiply rapidly as one reads through the pages of the Bible. David "wrote a letter to Joab" (2 Sam. 11 : 14), Jezebel "wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal" (1 Kings 21 : 8), Isaiah and Habakkuk wrote upon placards (Isa. 8 : 2 and Hab. 2 : 2), Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles in their captivity (Jer. 29 : 1), Luke wrote to Theophilus (Luke 1 : 3f.), Paul to his churches (Gal. 6 : 11), and the Revelator penned his matchless vision-book for the assurance and inspiration of his fellow Christians in their hour of trial. (Rev. 1 : 4.)

But more instructive than these suggestions of ability to use the pen are those reflections of possible centers of literary activity and classes of writers with at least a semipublic function. The name Kiriath-Sepher (Judg. 1 : 11) hints at familiarity with writings, the

name in another place actually being translated by the Septuagint "city of records" (Josh. 15 : 15). Again, the expression "the marshal's staff," in the revised version of Judges 5 : 14, is translated in the King James Bible "the pen of the writer," with a marginal note explaining the Hebrew as meaning "drawe with the pen."¹ The Alexandrian Greek version in this passage uses an expression which means a writer of narrative, while modern scholarship has sometimes rendered it, with the margin, the "staff of the scribe."² But even if, with the most recent interpretation of the expression, we make it mean simply "the muster-master's staff,"³ it will still refer to a military officer whose duty it was to enroll troops, and this implies some sort of writing, to say the least.

Once more, there were court officials in the time of David and Solomon who were called recorders, or "remembrancers," and scribes, and who would probably have to be familiar with writings. (2 Sam. 8 : 16f. and 20 : 23-25; 1 Kings 4 : 3.) And in the time of the divided kingdom we catch a glimpse of Hezekiah's talented scribe, Shebna (2 Kings 18 : 18, 37), who, because he was somewhat of a linguist (Isa. 36 : 11) and therefore presumably gifted with an instinct for literature, may well have been in charge of the "men of Hezekiah," while they were engaged in the task of transcribing and perhaps arranging the proverbs attributed to Solomon. (Prov. 25 : 1.) Still later the work of the royal scribe became so important and extensive as to justify his having a special chamber, or office (Jer. 36 : 10-12, 20 f.), while

¹ Cambridge Reprint of the Authorized Version of 1611, Vol II, p. 70.

² Barton, in "Biblical World," Vol. V, p. 127; Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," p. 22.

³ Moore, "International Critical Commentary on Judges," p. 150.

in the "writer's inkhorn" of Ezekiel (Ezek. 9 : 2) is reflected the class of professional scribes of that early day.

And in the New Testament a similar suggestion may be found. Paul composes and dictates such a masterpiece of argument as the Epistle to the Romans, the first Gospel is a fine piece of argument in narrative form,⁴ Luke is producing a comprehensive and orderly account of the life of Christ (Luke 1 : 3), and the author of Revelation brings out a book of artistic worth and literary beauty which he dares to call a work of prophecy. (Rev. 1 : 3 and 22 : 7.)

Thus there is abundant evidence in the Bible that its authors were not only able to do the mechanical work of writing, but were also men of fine instinct for literature and a high degree of literary ability. Care must be taken, of course, not to think of the Biblical writers as moved chiefly by the literary impulse, for the Bible is above all else religious in emphasis and purpose. But if literature is the sublimate of human experience, then we may not deny literary character to this volume, which has grown up out of the soil of human experience. Yet the interest is just now in another phase of the character of the Bible, and these questions arise: When Biblical authors wrote their books, what instruments and materials did they use? In the preparation of their works for the public did they do the actual writing with their own hands, or did they dictate to a scribe?

There are relatively but few suggestions in the Bible of the instruments and materials of writing, but these few are worthy of notice. Reference has been made to the "writer's inkhorn" of Ezekiel, which tells plainly of the use of ink. In Jeremiah 36 : 18 ink is mentioned again,

⁴ Burton, "Short Introduction," pp. 12-14.

when Baruch, asked how he had written all these words, with becoming modesty replied, "I wrote them with ink in the book." The verse is not free from question, however. Some Hebrew scholars suggest that instead of "with ink" we should read "with my hand." This change is advised because the princes could easily see what writing fluid the scribe had used, and Baruch wanted to distinguish between Jeremiah's part and his own in the production of the book.⁵ Moreover, the Septuagint version renders this clause simply, "and I wrote them in a book." Pens, too, are reflected as instruments of writing in such passages as Psalm 45 : 1 and Isaiah 8 : 1 and others, while in 3 Maccabees 4 : 20 the expression "writing pens" occurs. So also in the New Testament we find familiar mention of both these things. "Ye are an epistle of Christ," says Paul, "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. 3 : 3). In Second and Third John, again, paper and ink are mentioned, and also ink and pen (2 John, ver. 12, and 3 John, ver. 13), this last passage being literally, "with black and reed," thus suggesting a common black ink and an ordinary reed-pen. And these reflections of writing materials in the New Testament find abundant illustration and support in the Greek papyri of the period, one of the most striking being found in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus, II, 326, "I have set before the dear mother the ink pot and the pens."⁶

The materials upon which ancient books were written, however, is a more interesting subject and richer in suggestions. The common word for book and the terms used of writings and books make one think of a pliable mate-

⁵ Brown, "American Commentary on Jeremiah," p. 193.

⁶ Cited by Brooke in "International Critical Commentary on The Johanne Epistles," p. 194.

rial. Hezekiah "spread" his letter before Jehovah (Isa. 37 : 14), a term which suggests something that could be rolled and unrolled. And the book from which Jesus read that Sabbath day in the synagogue at Capernaum was undoubtedly written upon a pliable material, as is implied by the word translated "closed" (Luke 4 : 20), which may be rendered literally "rolled up."⁷ Such rolls are well illustrated in the Aramaic papyri from Elephantine. These are papyrus documents of various sorts preserved from a Jewish colony in Egypt in the fifth century B. C. They bear abundant witness to the fact that these Jews had vitally entered into the life of Egypt, as Jeremiah told the captives in Babylon they should do there. (Jer. 29 : 5-7.) These documents testify to the solidarity of the peoples of Biblical lands, and from the point of view of this study reveal the wide-spread use of papyrus for purposes of writing. A possible reflection of this writing material is found in an allusion to the washing out of portions of magical formulæ, like that implied in Numbers 5 : 23, as washing out writing was one way of making erasures on papyrus. It is sometimes felt that if the "scribe's knife," used so destructively by the king on Jeremiah's roll (Jer. 36 : 23), was the instrument for making erasures, then probably the material of the roll was leather. But papyrus when freshly made was not the brittle, fragile material we know it to be today, but rather durable, especially when not exposed to dampness.⁸ Hence papyrus is not excluded by the reference to an erasing-knife from the possibilities for Jeremiah's roll. A more definite suggestion of it, however, comes from a Greek word in the New Testament

⁷ Plummer, "International Critical Commentary on Luke," p. 122.

⁸ Milligan, "New Testament Documents," p. 176.

translated "book," as in Matthew 1 : 1, *biblos*, the name of the pith of the papyrus reed.

This reed-plant had a triangular stalk, which was cut into any convenient lengths for the purpose in mind. The pith of these lengths was next sliced into thin strips which were fastened edge to edge until a sheet of sufficient width was formed. Another sheet similarly made was then placed over the first with its fibers at right angles to those of the under sheet. The two layers, sometimes possibly with a sort of glue between, were pressed together to form a single sheet and left in the sun to dry. Then one side was scraped with a shell or piece of glass to remove any undue roughness. In addition, the nicer pieces were rubbed with ivory, or were hammered, before being ready for use. This was the common writing material of late antiquity, and probably many copies of different portions of the Old Testament were made on it. True, copies in any sense official, for the synagogue, say, would probably be made on skins, if the requirement of the Talmud that copies of the Law should be written on skins⁹ reflects ancient tradition. In the case of the Greek Old Testament and the New Testament, however, it is more than likely that papyrus was the material upon which the original copies were written.¹⁰

But we must pass on to elicit from the Bible its incidental testimony upon the question of how the writers performed the task of writing, whether they served as their own scribes, using the pen themselves, or dictated to amanuenses.

In the Old Testament the character of First and Second Kings (considered as one book) would suggest that the

⁹ Kenyon, art. "Writing" in Hastings' "Bible Dictionary," IV, p. 945.

¹⁰ Swete, "Introduction to Old Testament in Greek," p. 225; Kenyon, "Textual Criticism of the New Testament," 2 ed., p. 25f.

writer was his own penman. We have seen that the man who put the book in its present form had recourse to the histories of Solomon and the kings of Israel and Judah. This naturally divided his work into three great sections: (1) 1 Kings 1 to 11, about Solomon; (2) 1 Kings 12 to 2 Kings 17, about the divided monarchy; (3) 2 Kings 18 to 25, about the kingdom of Judah. In the first and third sections, when treating of a single kingdom, he employs a simple method, dealing with the events of Solomon's reign and those of the successive kings of Judah. But in the second section, where he has to bring together the separate accounts of two parallel kingdoms, he begins with the first king of the northern kingdom and continues the story of this king's reign to its close. Then he goes over to Judah and brings down the story of the southern kingdom to the end of the first three reigns, which are contemporary, the last one only about two years, however, with the northern king whose story he has already narrated. Again he returns to Israel for the story of the six kings whose reigns coincide with that of the last king of Judah he has mentioned. And so he continues alternating between Israel and Judah through the period of the dual monarchy, with some modifications where necessary, as when Jehu slew the reigning heads of both kingdoms and as when the writer stops to insert material referring to such prophets as Elijah and Elisha.

From this it would seem most reasonable to think of the writer as doing his own writing. He gathers the materials of his history from such sources as have been suggested in a previous chapter, himself supplying the framework in which he so skilfully arranges the extracts. At the same time he weaves in his own judgments of the

various kings and their doings, uniformly adverse in the case of the northern kings, while sometimes favorable in the case of Judah's rulers. In some such way he composed his great history, writing it with his own hand, to show how disobedience of the law of Jehovah brought condemnation upon the nation while obedience won divine approval and blessing.

In the New Testament the Gospel of Luke will perhaps furnish an example of this same sort of direct writing by the author. As Professor Goodspeed points out,¹¹ the first Christian teachers undoubtedly taught their converts the chief facts of the birth, public ministry, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and so formed the outlines of what is now called the gospel story. But in matters of detail those first recitals and early written accounts probably differed materially from one another and so caused some perplexity to later and more discriminating converts and Evangelists. Among such we may count Luke, Paul's physician-friend. In the preface to his Gospel he seems dissatisfied with the somewhat numerous and perhaps fragmentary accounts of the life of Jesus current in his day. He carefully sifts the details of gospel narrative and tradition and arranges his chosen materials with such skill as to construct a comprehensive and trustworthy record of the life of Jesus for the instruction and inspiration of his fellow Christians. And if Kenyon's suggestion of an author's autograph copy in this instance be accepted, this, together with the character of the Gospel, will more readily make one feel that Luke did his own writing.¹² "It is not hard to see the pile of notes of conversation or investigation lying near at

¹¹ "Story of the New Testament," pp. 63, 64.

¹² Kenyon, "Textual Criticism," p. 33.

hand. Here are papyri rolls of previous monographs on various phases of the life of Christ. Luke himself sits by his own small desk with his own roll spread out before him. He writes after he has gotten ready to write and with all available data at hand.”¹³

On the other hand, dictation is clearly reflected in the pages of the Bible. In the Old Testament the book of Jeremiah furnishes a conspicuous instance of this method. In the critical year of 604 B. C. the prophet finds himself excluded from the temple, for some unexplained reason. Yet he feels impelled to tell the people his conviction of the nation's duty in the national crisis which is upon them. He therefore sets about the God-given task of putting his messages into written form, hoping apparently thus to reach the public conscience and arouse the people to the need of mending their ways. Like many another Oriental, the prophet resorted to a scribe, one of his disciples, Baruch by name, who was in all probability a good penman. The roll was not long, for it seems to have been read three times in one day to people, princes, and king. But the writing of even a short roll drew the admiration of the princes, to whose wondering question the scribe replied briefly, “He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book” (Jer. 36 : 18). Kent has pictured the scene:¹⁴

In some quiet corner of Jerusalem or Anathoth sat Jeremiah, now in the prime of life, but old in experience, recalling his words uttered at earlier crises. Before him, with pen and parchment in hand, sat his devoted friend and disciple, eagerly writing down

¹³ Robertson, “Biblical Review,” April, 1920, p. 172.

¹⁴ “Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah,” *Historical Bible*, Vol. III, p. 251.

his words and perhaps assisting in that revision which has left these earlier sermons of Jeremiah the most finished poems in the Old Testament.

The same practise is reflected in the New Testament. Somewhere about spring, A. D. 50, Paul reached Corinth on his second missionary journey, to spend, as it now appears, some eighteen months in evangelistic work there. During this time he had occasion to write a couple of letters to his Christian friends and followers in Thessalonica. Silvanus and Timothy had just reached him with word from Macedonia, the latter bringing an encouraging report of the constancy of the Thessalonians. (1 Thess. 3 : 6f.) Hence Paul sent a letter off to Thessalonica. Soon, however, it became necessary to send a second one in order to correct some false impressions made by the first. These two letters were probably dictated to Silvanus, one of Paul's companions. At least he is joined with Paul and Timothy in the salutation, and if we may identify him with the individual of the same name in 1 Peter 5 : 12, he appears later as Peter's amanuensis. But reasonable assurance that Paul dictated is reached when we come to the end of this second letter to the Thessalonians and find the words, "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle" (2 Thess. 3 : 17).

A clearer instance of Paul's practise in this regard may be found in what we now know as the sixteenth chapter of Romans. The scene of that chapter is laid at the home of Gaius in Corinth, or Cenchreæ its port, probably the same person as the Gaius of 1 Corinthians 1 : 14. In the company is at least one influential public official, Erastus. The precise conditions under which the dictation was given are not clear. Gregory makes the pas-

sage refer to the dictation of the letter to the Romans, a long task in the course of which there may have been some interruptions.¹⁵ The chapter is better considered, on the other hand, as a part of a letter of introduction for Phœbe to Paul's Ephesian friends.¹⁶ This letter, similar perhaps to that written on behalf of Apollos (Acts 18 : 27), was dictated by Paul to Tertius, who took occasion to insert his own greeting along with Paul's to the friends in Ephesus. (Rom. 16 : 22.) It is just possible, of course, that Tertius is merely copying a letter written by Paul himself, yet, when taken in connection with other reflections of Paul's habit of dictation, the passage suggests that the apostle is here dictating. So also in 1 Corinthians 16 : 21 and Colossians 4 : 18 Paul refers to his own writing of the greeting in such a way as to imply that he had dictated the body of the letter.

There are, however, passages which may show that at times the great apostle to the Gentiles did the actual work of writing himself. In that most personal and intimate of all his letters, To Philemon, he says, "I Paul write it with mine own hand," though these words may refer only to the next four, Paul's "promissory note," "I will repay it" (Philemon, ver. 19). The words in Galatians 6 : 11 are more difficult. Some have felt that they refer to what goes before, thus pointing to a somewhat lengthy letter in the apostle's own hand, the reason for his laborious task in this instance being his own sense of delicacy in wanting no intermediary at all between himself and those he feels compelled to scold so sharply.¹⁷ On the contrary and more probably, if the statement in

¹⁵ "Canon and Text of the New Testament," p. 302.

¹⁶ Cf. Goodspeed, "Story of the New Testament," p. 33.

¹⁷ Milligan, "New Testament Documents," p. 24.

this verse refers only to the closing words of the epistle, they constitute another instance of the apostle's own writing, this time in a bolder hand than the scribe's writing, perhaps humorously, for the purpose of impressing both reader and congregation.¹⁸ In whichever way the verse is interpreted, it seems clear that Paul's usual practise was to dictate, signing the letters in his own hand as was the custom of the day.

Many illustrations of dictation as a common practise of antiquity abound both in non-Christian documents and in early Christian writers a little later than the period of the New Testament. There is extant a papyrus letter dating from about A. D. 50 from an Egyptian olive planter, Mystarion, commending his messenger to one Stotoetes, in which the change of handwriting in the closing word, "Farewell," seems to indicate Mystarion's own hand.¹⁹ Again, an Oxyrhynchus letter of about A. D. 95 is dictated, the sender authenticating it by adding at the close, "I, Heraclas, have signed."²⁰ And Eusebius, the historian of the early church, tells us that Origen dictated "to more than seven amanuenses, who relieved each other at appointed times."²¹

What now, in a word, is the meaning of all this? On very ordinary materials and with the common writing instruments of every-day life our Bible was written. Moreover, its writers were left free to follow each his own method. They were human and subject to the limitations of our human kind. They not only had to use their powers of observation, judgment, imagination, in order to express the truth as they felt God gave it to them,

¹⁸ Cf. Burton, "International Critical Commentary on Galatians," p. 348.

¹⁹ Deissmann, "Light from the Ancient East," p. 157.

²⁰ Milligan, "Greek Papyri," p. 25.

²¹ "Church History," Bk. vi, ch. 23 : 2.

but they were restricted also to the use of such means of expression as they found ready at hand. This means that while they were guided in the selection and use of material for teaching special lessons, they were at the same time compelled to exercise the powers ordinarily employed in literary composition. The human and divine elements in the Bible blend in harmony.

IV

EARLY READERS OF THE BIBLE

Study Outline

1. Find as many reflections in the Bible as you can of the form of early books.

2. Read through at one sitting, aloud if possible, any single book of the Bible. Try to imagine yourself writing it by hand in the form of a roll about twelve inches in height, and then estimate the length of the roll. How long a roll would it require for the whole Bible?

3. What suggestions of the circulation of the different Biblical writings can you find in the Bible? Cf. Acts 8 : 28 and 15 : 21.

4. Notice the assignment of the quotation in Mark 1 : 2, 3 to Isaiah (or to "the prophets"); find the writers there quoted, and then try to explain Mark's confusion of the authors he cites.

5. Read 2 Kings 22 and 23 carefully, and try to determine the length of the law-book there reflected, whether longer or shorter than our present Pentateuch.

6. Study Nehemiah 8 to 10 and try to determine whether Ezra's law-roll was longer or shorter than Josiah's.

7. Compare Daniel 9 : 2 and Luke 24 : 44, and then state the three great divisions of the Hebrew Bible, learning the books of each.

8. Can you suggest any reasons why early Christians should collect and use in public services Paul's letters, the Gospels, and other Christian writings?

9. How long were the books of the Bible in coming together into one great collection?

Scripture References and Helps

Psalm 40 : 7; 2 Kings 19 : 14; Ezekiel 2 : 9f.; Revelation 10:2; 5:1; Jeremiah 36:23; 1 Maccabees 1:56-58; Luke 4 : 17-20; Acts 8 : 28; 15 : 21; 13 : 15; Revelation 1:3; 2 Peter 1:1; Mark 1:2, 3; 2 Kings 22 and 23; 2 Kings 22 : 8, 10; 23 : 2; 23 : 15-20; Exodus 20 : 24; Leviticus 17 : 1-9; Nehemiah 8 to 10; Nehemiah 8 : 13-18; Deuteronomy 16 : 13-17; Leviticus 23 : 36 marg.; Daniel 9 : 2; Jeremiah 25 : 12 and 29 : 10; Luke 24 : 44; Colossians 4 : 16; 2 Peter 3 : 16.

Milligan, "New Testament Documents," pp. 171-229.

Souter, "Text and Canon of the New Testament," pp. 149-194.

Goodspeed, "Story of the New Testament," pp. 137-144.

Westcott, "The Bible in the Church," pp. 19-140.

Price, "Ancestry of the English Bible," pp. 127-130.

Ryle, "Canon of the Old Testament," pp. 47-94, 104-199.

Robertson Smith, "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church," pp. 149-187.

Conley, "The Bible in Modern Light," pp. 48-53.

Dods, "The Bible, Its Origin and Nature," pp. 33-59.

Peake, "The Bible: Its Origin, Significance, and Abiding Worth," pp. 64-75.

Standard Bible Dictionary, art. "Bible," §§5, 6, pp. 100-102.

Further questions about our Bible press for answer. When its different books were written, how were they

put into circulation? To answer this question it is necessary to ask another: What was Baruch's book like when finished, and Tertius', and all the rest?

Our study of writing materials led to the suggestion of the roll-form for early books. Those suggestions may be further supplemented by more definite reflections of rolls. The psalmist's phrase comes first to mind, "In the roll of the book" (Ps. 40 : 7). Practically the same expression occurs, as we have already seen, in that famous thirty-sixth chapter of the book of Jeremiah. As we have noted also, Hezekiah's letter was probably in the form of a roll, since it was "spread" before Jehovah. (2 Kings 19 : 14.) The same word is used of Ezechiel's "roll of a book, written within and without" with "lamentations and mourning and woe" (Ezek. 2 : 9f.). The same form of book was probably in the mind of the Revelator as he pictured the "little book," opened, in the hand of the cloud-clad angel from heaven (Rev. 10 : 2), and also the close-sealed book of the future in the right hand of heaven's majestic ruler (Rev. 5 : 1), in all likelihood doom-rolls overfull of awful things soon to happen.¹

In these and other similar references there are thus rather plain reflections of the roll-book, though we must be prepared to admit the use of leaf-books earlier than was once thought possible. The writing on rolls was generally in columns of varying width, of course, but more often narrow, and generally so close together as to allow little space for notes except at the top and bottom. In Jeremiah 36 : 23 the word translated "leaves" has as a marginal variant the word "columns," a suggestion of column-writing on rolls. This form of

¹ Cf. Goodspeed, "Journal of Biblical Literature," 1903, p. 74.

arranging the writing made reading easier, since it would thus be possible to have several columns before the eye without unrolling too much of the roll at once.

It is not known precisely how many writings in every instance were put up in one roll. A few large rolls are known to have existed but, as early as the middle of the third century B. C., Callimachus, an Alexandrian scholar, expressed the sentiment,² "A big book is a big nuisance." In the period with which we are dealing smaller rolls predominated, and the common practise was to limit a roll to a single work, unless, of course, it was very short, or too long to be put on a single roll of convenient size.

An interesting tradition concerning the rolls of the Old Testament in this particular comes to light in the Jewish Talmud: ³

Our rabbis taught: It is not forbidden to write the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa in a single volume. The words of Rabbi Meir were, that Rabbi Jehudah used to say, "The Law should be written separately, and the Prophets separately, and the Hagiographa separately." The Wise Men also used to say, each book should be written separately.

Other passages in this Jewish literature suggest the same thing, and it is clear from the unwieldy shape of rolls that it would be practically impossible to combine different works of any length in a single roll.

But as to the length of the original rolls of the New Testament it is now possible to judge with a fair degree of accuracy. This information has come to light within the present generation in the Greek papyrus manuscripts, many of which have been found and brought to the

² Quoted by Putnam, "Authors and Their Public in Ancient Times," third ed., p. 142.

³ Quoted by Ryle, "Canon of the Old Testament," p. 235.

museums of the Western world. Sir Frederick Kenyon, of the British Museum, has examined a great many of the extant papyri and has ventured to estimate the probable lengths of the New Testament rolls. The shortest New Testament books might have been written upon a single sheet of papyrus six inches wide by about eleven inches in height. Second Thessalonians would require about fifteen inches of papyrus of the same height. The remaining letters of Paul would require longer and longer rolls up to nearly twelve feet of material for the Epistle to the Romans. Kenyon then estimates the length of the roll containing the book of Revelation at fifteen feet; the Gospel of Mark, nineteen feet; John, twenty-three feet six inches; Matthew, thirty feet; and Luke and Acts, about thirty-two feet each. This would make the entire New Testament, if put into a single roll-book, a roll over two hundred feet in length, pretty clearly prohibiting any one's having a copy of the whole New Testament in that early period.⁴

Is there now any incidental evidence in the Bible of the circulation of these rolls? Naturally one thinks first of the quotations from the Old Testament by writers of the New Testament books, and such a use presupposes the circulation of books. But there is more than this. In 1 Maccabees 1 : 56-58 we have a reflection of both public and private copies of Jewish Scriptures. For the emissaries of the Syrian king not only destroyed copies of the law found in public places, but also ferreted out those people who treasured such Scriptures in private, an unnecessary proceeding if copies of the law were not circulating in some form among the people. Again, when Jesus returned to Galilee from the Temptation in the

⁴ Kenyon, "Criticism of the New Testament," second ed., pp. 33-35.

power of the Spirit and entered the synagogue of his home town, there was handed to him a roll of Isaiah, from which he read, then "rolled [it] up" and handed it back to the attendant. (Luke 4 : 17-20.) Another copy of the same great roll was perhaps in the hands of the Ethiopian as he pored over the wonderful messages of the fine Prophet of the Exile while journeying homeward along the desert highway from Jerusalem down past Gaza. (Acts 8 : 28.) The daily examination of the Scriptures by the Berœans suggests more than a public reading from a single official copy, and so the circulation of private copies. Once more, the law of Moses was widely read (Acts 15 : 21), and even if it were only the public reading in the synagogue, yet it was "in every city," clearly implying the multiplication and circulation of copies of the law. The same is also true of the prophets who were read along with the law. (Acts 13 : 15.) In a similar manner the book of Revelation was perhaps addressed to a wider public than just the seven churches in Asia, though under the names of these (Rev. 1 : 3), while Second Peter is clearly not a letter to an individual church, but a tract for the writer's fellow believers anywhere who would read it. (2 Peter 1 : 1.)

These and other indications of the early circulation of the books of the Bible are abundantly supported by the literature of the later church and show us that as among the Jews their Scriptures were read by both priest and people, so among both Jewish and Gentile Christians the public and private use of the Bible continued and increased.⁵

Our thought thus far has been of rolls containing entire books. But we must recognize the early circulation

⁵ Cf. Harnack, "Bible Reading in the Early Church," pp. 31-47.

of rolls, possibly leaf-books also, which contained only extracts from different writings, each such book being a sort of compendium of excerpts upon a given topic, or group of related topics. In the "Extracts" of Melito, bishop of Sardis near the end of the second century A. D., we have an illustration of this practise, which probably reaches back into the first Christian century, if not, indeed, into prechristian times. These books of excerpts would be brief manuals of passages gotten together for purposes of teaching and argument. Melito's words are as follows:⁶

Melito, to Onesimus, his brother, greeting: Since, showing your zeal for the word, you often asked that extracts be made for you from both the law and the prophets concerning the Saviour and all our faith, and besides wished to learn also the precise truth of the ancient books, how many they were in number and what their order, I was eager to perform such a task.

These words show that this work of Melito's was a collection of testimonies to Christ and the church drawn from the Old Testament. There were others like it later and probably also earlier. Indeed, it is possible that early Christian writers had access to such "Testimonia" written in Hebrew or Aramaic.⁷ At any rate, the circulation of such "books of extracts" goes far to explain the confusion in citations of the New Testament from the Old Testament in places like Mark 1 : 2, 3, where passages from Malachi and Isaiah are assigned to the latter alone. The marginal variant in Mark at these verses, reading "in the prophets" instead of "in Isaiah the prophet," points just as clearly to such a source for the

⁶ In Eusebius, "Church History," IV, 26, 13.

⁷ Moffatt, "Introduction to Literature of the New Testament," p. 24.

quotation: as if the author had found it in a book of excerpts from the prophets, who were unnamed in the "extracts." The same explanation serves also for a similar difficulty in Matthew 27 : 9.

Moreover, not only does the early circulation of rolls make it possible to account for such features of our Bible as have been mentioned, but it also lies back of the collection and grouping of the Biblical books in their present arrangement. It helps us to understand better the early stages in the process by which the "sixty-six books" were slowly gathered together and made into what today we call the canon of Scripture.

In the twenty-second and twenty-third chapters of Second Kings we have a graphic account of the discovery of a "book of the law" in the eighteenth year of Josiah. The book was found in the course of some repairs in the temple. The high priest recognized the character of the book and delivered it to Shaphan, the scribe. The latter made it known to the king, who was greatly disturbed at its condemnation of the people for forsaking Jehovah. Vigorous measures of religious reform were instituted at once: a public covenant was entered into between king and people to confirm the words of the newly found law-book, idolatry with all its abominations was abolished, and an elaborate celebration of the Passover was observed, such as had not been known "from the days of the judges."

What, now, was this book of the law? That it was the entire law of our present Pentateuch seems impossible. For this new-found law-book was apparently read through at least twice in one day, since the narrative seems to leave no room for intervening days between the readings. (2 Kings 22 : 8, 10.) Then it was read again to the

assembled people. (2 Kings 23 : 2.) Moreover, Josiah's reforms carried out, not the requirements of all the Pentateuchal laws, but only of those in our present book of Deuteronomy. In fact, some parts of the Pentateuch contain laws which conflict with those that guided Josiah's reforms. The one item of the proper place for offering sacrifice will suffice for illustration. In Deuteronomy it is to be at Jerusalem, and Josiah orders the destruction of outside places of worship. (2 Kings 23 : 15-20.) But in Exodus 20 : 24 and Leviticus 17 : 1-9 the place of sacrifice is not thus limited. Hence, when we read this realistic account of the finding of this particular book of the law, of the effect of its being read upon both king and people, and of the changes that took place compared with the commands in the book of Deuteronomy, we are led to believe that Josiah's book of the law thus clearly described in the Bible was a short roll comparable in length to the nucleus of the present fifth book of the Pentateuch.

There is, however, another law-book reflected in the pages of our Bible. For this we have to come down nearly two hundred years later to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. In chapters 8 to 10 of the book of Nehemiah we find another account of a public reading from "the book of the law of Moses," "the book of the law of God." What was this book of the law? Until the reading of this law the people had not known the details of the proper celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. (Neh. 8 : 13-18.) The law in Deuteronomy had not required the people to dwell in booths for the celebration of the feast (Deut. 16 : 13-17), while here this feature of the observance becomes an important element in it, a thing the people had not done "since the days of

Joshua the son of Nun" (Neh. 8 : 17). Again, Deuteronomy required just seven days for the feast (Deut. 16 : 13-15), while the Levitical law adds an eighth day as a "closing festival" (Lev. 23 : 36 marg.). Hence the inference is rather plain that Ezra's book of the law is of larger content than the earlier law-book of the people. And if this be true, it helps to explain the addition of other elements, until in the course of time that which began as prophetic interpretation of the nation's history and reformation of popular laws was brought to completion through scribal expansion into the "Law" par excellence.

So far as the further collection of Old Testament writings is concerned there is but one brief reflection in the pages of the Bible, a glimpse of another devout Jew pouring over his sacred books. In Daniel 9 : 2 the seer is puzzled over the discrepancy between the exile of Israel and the promises of its restoration. He is therefore pondering Jeremiah's words. (Cf. Jer. 25 : 12; 29 : 10.) It is just a suggestion that "the books," to which he thus casually refers, were well known to his readers, and that they included at least the prophecies of Jeremiah. And if one prophet has come to be included among "the books," why may not others have been also? There is evidence that this was actually the case, though the information does not lie in our Bible. It is found in one of the so-called apocryphal books. About 180 B. C. the Wisdom of Sirach was written, probably in Aramaic. About fifty years later the grandson of the author translated this work into Greek and added a prologue of his own. In this prologue we find mention three times over of the prophets as the second group of a threefold division of the Hebrew Scriptures. And in the Gospel of Luke the

same threefold collection of sacred Scriptures comes before us in the words of Jesus, "the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms" (Luke 24 : 44).

There is no reflection in the New Testament of the collection of its books into an authoritative body of Scripture. Reason therefor is not wanting. Christians of the first century did not seem to regard their own writings as of equal authority and importance with those of the Old Testament. They would not therefore begin the task of collecting the new writings, at least in any formal manner, for the purpose of using them in public. Of course, when a letter from Paul was received by a church it was probably put away to be reread, or to be copied for some individual or another church. In fact, Paul so directs at least once. (Col. 4 : 16.) Perhaps it was still too early for the general exchange of letters between churches, and individual reading of letters would not become wide-spread until Christianity embraced more of those who had learned to read. But that such a practise must have begun in the first century is suggested in early second-century Christian writings. Ignatius, the Christian bishop of Antioch, wrote a number of letters to the churches which ministered unto him as he was on his way to Rome to martyrdom. Collection of these letters was made by Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, before the middle of the second century. In writing to the Philippians this aged saint uses these illuminating words :

You wrote to me, both you and Ignatius, that if any one was going to Syria he should carry the letters from you also. This I will do, if I get a convenient opportunity, either I or he whom I send as representative for you also. The letters of Ignatius which were sent to us by him, and as many others as we had by us, we send to you (Phil. 13 : 1).

If Christians before the middle of the second century exchanged non-apostolic letters, is it unreasonable to assume that in the first century some exchange of Paul's letters had taken place? And not only were such letters exchanged and collected, but they were also, in all probability, very early regarded with something of the veneration accorded to Scripture. For before the middle of the second century the writer of Second Peter had come to think of Paul's letters as Scripture (2 Peter 3 : 16), very probably a later stage in a process begun some time before.

Yet Paul's letters, though perhaps collected first, were not generally invested with the sanctity and authority of Scripture as early as the Gospels. These come into clear light as something well known in the churches before A. D. 150, a body of documents read in the public services of the church along with the Old Testament Scriptures and invested with the same authority.⁸

Thereafter the formal collection of Christian writings goes on apace, and Gospels, letters, tracts and apocalypses begin to be grouped together with the books of the Old Testament under the name of the New Testament. Yet there is much diversity as to the details of the different collections, some including more books than others. And it is not until A. D. 367, in a letter written by Athanasius of Alexandria at Easter, that we get just the twenty-seven books which are included in our present New Testament.

Thus we see something of the process of gathering the Biblical writings into a book, a Bible, like the divine processes in the world of nature, a long one. From the seventh century B. C., and earlier, to the fourth century

⁸ Cf. Goodspeed, "Story of the New Testament," pp. 137-144; Souter, "Text and Canon of the New Testament," pp. 160-168.

A. D. these sixty-six books were being gathered into a collection, and as they proved inspiring to those who used them they were gradually invested with that sanctity and authority which made them what we today call Bible. But still more than this is necessary before the Bible becomes the book we know it to be today. When written and gathered together in any number the books, if made available at all for lands outside, must be translated into the languages of other peoples. And translation will inevitably affect the character of the Bible, making it more cosmopolitan, more like the world-book Christians now recognize it to be. To the subject of the translation of the Bible, then, must we turn.

V

EARLY TRANSLATORS: THE SEVENTY

Study Outline

1. Some marginal variants reflect the simplicity of the early Hebrew, as 2 Chronicles 24 : 13, "Healing went up upon the work." Find as many of this sort of variants in the margin of your Bible as you can. What conception of the Hebrew language do you get from these variants?

2. Read in the appendix to this book the excerpts from the Aristeas-story of the Septuagint, and tell why the details as there given seem unreliable.

3. Find from encyclopedias or Bible dictionaries the number and order of books in the Hebrew Bible; learn the books of your English version; find from a Roman Catholic Bible the number and order of books of the Old Testament. Compare these three lists of books and try to explain the differences.

4. What bearing on the number and order of books in the Bible has the early circulation of rolls as indicated in Chapter IV?

5. See the marginal note on Genesis 6 : 3 and find other similar variants showing how the Greek version of the Old Testament differs from the original Hebrew.

6. Study the passage from the Greek version of Jeremiah 27 : 1-9 as given on page 66 of this book and try to explain it as a translation of an original Hebrew text.

7. Compare some New Testament quotations of Old Testament passages with the Old Testament itself, and

try to explain the differences. How has the Septuagint influenced the New Testament? Of what value is the Septuagint for a proper understanding of the Old Testament?

Scripture References and Helps

Proverbs 26 : 3; 1 Samuel 17 : 38-43; chap. 17 and 18; Exodus 24 : 10; 2 Chronicles 24 : 13; 1 Kings 11 : 40; 14 : 25f.; 8 : 12, 13 and 53, 54; Genesis 4 : 8a; Deuteronomy 32 : 43; Jeremiah 27 : 1-9.

Robertson Smith, "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church," pp. 73-148.

Price, "Ancestry of the English Bible," pp. 48-73.

Hunting, "Story of Our Bible," pp. 207-209.

Hastings' Bible Dictionary, art. "Septuagint."

Encyclopedia Britannica, art. "Septuagint."

Peake, "The Bible: Its Origin, Significance, and Abiding Worth," pp. 42-63.

Hastings' Bible Dictionary, 1 vol. ed., art. "Greek Versions of the Old Testament, 1. Septuagint," pp. 315-319; art. "Text, Versions, and Language of the Old Testament," pp. 908, 909; art. "Bible," §§2-5, 95-97.

Standard Bible Dictionary, art. "Versions," §§1, 2, pp. 888, 889.

The various books of the Bible were written upon rolls, gathered together into collections, copied into leaf-books, and finally, in a few instances at least, formed into a single large volume. But there is another interesting side to this wonderful book, and it is the story of how the Bible passed out of the languages in which it was first written, from one language to another, until it came at

last to be translated into the language we understand, and so made familiar to us. This story begins with the account of the translation of the Old Testament into Greek for Jews living outside of Palestine.

The original language of this part of the Bible was Hebrew except some chapters in the books of Ezra and Daniel. These small portions and a few straggling words elsewhere are in Aramaic, a closely allied dialect. Ancient Hebrew writing was simple, consisting of consonants only. Some of the letters were assigned vowel values very early and would thus help to preserve the proper pronunciation of the language and make it possible for foreigners to find a key to the language. But the complicated vowel system of the Hebrew Bible as it is printed today is an invention of medieval Jewish scholars for the purpose of preserving the proper pronunciation of the words.¹

In the ancient language there was relatively little attempt to express the complications of thought so manifest in modern writing. Statement followed statement, and the reader, or hearer, was supposed to think out for himself the proper relation between clauses. An extreme instance is found in the book of Proverbs (Prov. 26 : 3), where a set of three phrases occurs without any verb at all, preserved even in the English translation in this instance, the mere statement of the ideas one after another suggesting their connection. A similar feature of the language, though this time with sentences, is found in the narrative of David and Goliath. Within the space of six verses (1 Sam. 17 : 38-43) the conjunction "and" occurs twenty times (twenty-two in the Hebrew), and the first three clauses of verse 42, when given literally, illustrate pointedly this coordinating quality of early He-

¹ Price, "Ancestry of the English Bible," p. 32f.

brew: "And the Philistine looked up and saw David and despised him."

Essentially the same thing is true of the ancient Hebrew vocabulary. The words reflect for the most part an age of observation and contemplation rather than one of verification and reasoning, as in the modern period. They expressed objects of the external world, the appearance of things, more than conceptions or inward being. This gave the words a sense-quality and made the language highly figurative. The word "bone," for instance, as significant of the inmost substance of the body, served at times for our modern word "self," or "very." Thus in the phrase "the very heaven" (Exod. 24 : 10) the word for bone occurs in this sense, a phrase which the King James translators rendered by "the body of heaven," not daring to go to the extreme figurativeness of the original Hebrew. One more illustration will suffice to make clear this superfigurative quality of the old Hebrew words. In 2 Chronicles 24 : 13, where it speaks of the repairing of the Temple, the Revised Version reads, "So the workmen wrought, and the work of repairing went forward in their hands." But a striking marginal note on this verse shows how figuratively the Hebrew expressed the thought of the last clause, "healing went up upon the work."

Now it was this marvelously simple and highly figurative language that in the course of time came to be translated into a radically different tongue, the Greek of the non-Palestinian Jew and his Gentile neighbors. There were in early times flourishing communities of Jews in Egypt. Just how early they migrated thither it is difficult to say. About the middle of the tenth century B. C., before the death of Solomon, Jeroboam, one of the king's

servants, fell under his master's sore displeasure and ran away to Egypt. (1 Kings 11 : 40.) A few years later "Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem; and he took away the treasures of the house of Jehovah and the treasures of the king's house" (1 Kings 14 : 25f.). While nothing is here said about captives, it would be passing strange if that king did not take back with him prisoners from Palestine and Jerusalem. But more definitely, we know from the Elephantine papyri, papyrus letters from Egypt in the fifth century B. C., that there was a flourishing colony of Jews on the island in the Nile just at the foot of the first cataract. This Jewish colony had a temple, built and in use as early as 525 B. C., in which they worshiped the God of their fathers. They were much like their kinsmen in Palestine before the exile in their devotion to the temple. For when the Egyptians destroyed this building, the Jews of the community regarded it as a calamity, saying in one of the letters,² "But when this had happened, we with our wives and our children put on sackcloth and fasted and prayed to Ihu, the lord of heaven."

So it was in other parts of Egypt also. Alexandria was the home of a large and flourishing community of Jews, and it is here that we must probably look for the beginnings of that process of translation which was to render the Bible into the languages of many different nations. The story of the translation of the Hebrew law into the Alexandrian Greek is told by one who calls himself Aristeas, in a letter to his brother. Aristeas pretends to be a high official at the court of king Ptolemy II, who reigned over Egypt 285-247 B. C. The king has founded a great

² Sprengling, "Aramaic Papyri of Elephantine in English," *American Journal of Theology*, Vol. XXI, p. 438.

library at Alexandria and has been gathering books for it from all over the known world. The librarian calls the king's attention to the value of the Jewish sacred books and suggests that they be secured for the royal library. An embassy is sent to Jerusalem, one member of which is this Aristeas, to find men who can translate the Law into Greek for the king's library. Finally with the help of the high priest at Jerusalem seventy-two Jewish elders are found, six from each of the twelve tribes, gifted in language and able to do the work of translating their Law into Greek. These seventy-two elders proceed to Alexandria and are there received by the king with all the pomp and feasting he can give them. After being tested with hard questions they are led to a quiet building on what was then an island. Spreading out their Law rolls beautifully written in letters of gold on finely prepared skins, they begin the work of translation, and after seventy-two days of uninterrupted toil translate the whole Law into Greek. The translation is then tested by the Alexandrian Jews, heard read by the king, and finally accepted in a formal manner for the great library. So runs the story of the so-called pseudo-Aristeas concerning the origin of the best-known Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament. This recital has given rise to the name by which this version has become widely known, the Septuagint, a Latin word meaning seventy.

But the details of the story as thus told by this pseudo-Aristeas are probably fanciful, and cannot be relied upon to give the entire truth about the origin of this first great version of the Jewish Scriptures. As suggested, the needs of Greek-speaking Jews in and around Alexandria and their desire for the Scriptures of their fathers in the language of their daily life were perhaps the underlying

cause of the translation. The actual task of translating the Hebrew Bible was undoubtedly done at different periods during a hundred and fifty years or more, and was done by a number of different men whose names are unknown.

The most striking difference between this first Greek version of the Old Testament and the original Hebrew lies in the number and arrangement of the separate books. In the early Hebrew Bible the books numbered twenty-four and were arranged in three groups corresponding to the stages of their acceptance as Scripture. But the Septuagint adds a number of books and arranges the whole list in a different order. In the Hebrew Bible we find: the Law, five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; the Prophets, eight books, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve (= the Minor Prophets); the Writings, eleven books, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles. But the Septuagint has the following: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Kingdoms (4 books = Samuel and Kings), Omissions (2 books = Chronicles), Esdras, (2 books = Ezra and Nehemiah), Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song, Job, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations, Epistle of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Maccabees (4 books).

A little study of these two arrangements will show where the Greek Old Testament differs from the Hebrew Bible. The first group, the Law, appears unchanged in

the Septuagint. The other two groups are broken up in the Greek version and distributed apparently on the basis of literary character. As Swete remarks,³ "histories were made to consort with histories, prophetic and poetical writings with others of their respective kinds," an order and arrangement of books best explained by the early circulation of books in roll-form and change therefrom to leaf-book form. It would be natural for the owner of a roll of Esther to place it for keeping in the same box with the rolls of Judith and Tobit. For these books were regarded as similar. Clement of Rome, writing near the end of the first century A. D. to the Christian church in Corinth, cites in the same chapter as examples of self-sacrifice "the blessed Judith," willing to risk her life for her besieged city, and "the faith-perfect Esther," willing to assume the same risk for her people. (1 Clem. 55 : 4, 6.) If, then, these writings were held in like regard, when the time came to put the rolls into leaf-book form, what more natural than that an entire set of rolls should be included in a volume?

But in order to appreciate more thoroughly the character of this Greek Old Testament and at the same time to gain added light on our own form of the Old Testament in the English Bible it becomes necessary to go more minutely into the differences between the Hebrew Scriptures and this first Alexandrian Greek translation of them.

These two Bibles differ in amount of matter, as is plain from the difference in number of books. But difference appears also in brief passages, making possible a closer comparison. In Genesis 4 : 8a, our American Standard Version, representing the Hebrew, reads, "And Cain

³ "Introduction to Old Testament in Greek," p. 218.

told (or, said unto) Abel his brother," while the Greek version has, "And Cain said unto Abel his brother, 'Let us go into the plain.'" Another interesting passage is found in 1 Kings 8. Here verses 12 and 13 are missing from the Septuagint, but between verses 53 and 54 this version inserts the following striking addition:

Then Solomon spoke concerning the house how he had completed the building of it,

"The sun in heaven the Lord made known;
He said he would dwell in darkness.
Build my house, a house fitting for thyself,
To dwell in newness."

Behold, is not this written in the book of the song?

There are some errors in the Greek of this passage which show that it is a translation of a Hebrew original. Moreover, the transposition of a single letter (the smallest in the Hebrew alphabet) in the Hebrew word for "the song" makes that word into the name of that old book of war poetry we have already met, the book of Jashar.⁴ Once more, in Deuteronomy 32 : 43, the Song of Moses, four couplets of the Hebrew are expanded into eight in the Septuagint, thus:

	Rejoice, O heavens, with him, And let the sons of God wor- ship him.
Rejoice, O nations, with his people:	Rejoice, O nations, with his peo- ple, And let all the angels of God be strong in him.
For he will avenge the blood of his servants,	For the blood of his servants he avenges,

⁴ Robertson Smith, "Old Testament in the Jewish Church," p. 434f.

And he will render vengeance to
his enemies,

And he will avenge, and will
render vengeance to his ene-
mies,

And he will pay back those who
hate

And will make expiation for his
land, for his people.

And will cleanse out the land of
his people.

There are likewise numerous lengthy passages which also well illustrate the differences between the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint. Of these we may notice two or three. The book of Esther is noteworthy. This book in the Greek version is over one hundred verses longer than the Hebrew original, and the additions are distributed through the book in sections, or paragraphs, in some instances as long as average-length chapters. The first section consists of seventeen verses telling the story of Mordecai's first promotion at court in the second year of Artaxerxes (Ahasuerus), placed before chapter 1 of our English Esther, which opens in the third year of that king. The second section, of seven verses, professing to give a copy of the letter of Ahasuerus referred to in verse 13 of chapter 3, commanding the destruction of the Jews, is placed in the Greek version of Esther between verses 13 and 14 of our English Bible, which, of course, represents the Hebrew Bible. The third and fourth sections, of thirty and sixteen verses respectively, come between chapters 4 and 5 of the English text, and give the prayers of Mordecai and Esther and the latter's appearance before the king to win his favor. The fifth section, of twenty-four verses, comes between the twelfth and thirteenth verses of chapter 8 and purports to give a copy of the letter referred to in verses 9-12. The last and sixth section, of eleven verses, is a sort of epilogue, closing the

whole Esther story by telling of the institution of the feast of Purim (Lots), and closing with this note which professes to relate the circumstances under which the book was taken to Egypt:

In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Dosithus, who said that he was a priest and Levite, and his son Ptolemy brought the above letter of Purim, as they called it, which had been translated (so they said) by one Lysimachus, son of Ptolemy, a resident at Jerusalem.

Again, a portion of Jeremiah 27 will illustrate the same differences between the Hebrew and Septuagint texts of this prophet. The first verse of the Hebrew text is omitted in the Greek version, but verse 2 of the Hebrew is numbered 1 in the Greek. Hence, translating the first nine verses of the Greek version, putting the Hebrew verse-numberings in parentheses, we have the following:

1(2) Thus said the Lord, Make bonds and bars, and place them around thy neck, 2(3) and you shall send them to the king of Idumea and to the king of Moab and to the king of the sons of Ammon and to the king of Tyre and to the king of Sidon, by the hands of their messengers who came to meet them to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. 3(4) And you shall arrange with them to say to their masters, Thus said the Lord, the God of Israel, Thus shall ye say to their masters, 4(5) I made the earth by my great power and my outstretched arm, and I will give to whomsoever it shall seem good in my eyes. 5(6) I gave the earth to Nabouchodonosor, king of Babylon, to serve him, and the beasts of the field to work for him. 6(7) And the nation and kingdom which shall not place their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, with the sword and with famine will I visit them, said the Lord, until they fail in his hand. 7(8) And ye, hearken not to your false prophets and those who divine for you and those who cause you to have dreams and those who give omens for you and practise sorcery, saying, Ye shall not work for the king of Babylon;

8(9) for they prophesy to you to separate you from your land. 9(10) And the nation that shall bring its neck in under the yoke of the king of Babylon and work for him, then will I leave it (them) upon its (their) own land; and it (they) shall work it and dwell in it.

Lastly, the Goliath-David stories in 1 Samuel 17 furnish an instance where Septuagint differences from the Hebrew serve to clear up difficulties in the latter text. In the Hebrew, and so of course the English, of chapter 16 : 14 ff. we are told how David, introduced to Saul's court, becomes a favorite with the king. Then in chapter 17 we have an account in which David, though now the king's armor-bearer, does not follow his sovereign to battle. Verse 15 only makes the difficulty more noticeable, and with 16, may be an editorial attempt to smooth out contradictions. Then David is sent by his father to the camp with supplies for the brothers and a small gift for the captain of the local regiment of militia to which they belong: but no gift for the king. Moreover, David is utterly unknown at court, neither Saul nor Abner having heard of him before. (1 Sam. 17 : 55f.) But in the Septuagint, 17 : 12-31, 41, 50 and 17 : 55 to 18 : 5 are missing. Without these verses we get a tolerably consistent account, in which David is in camp (1 Sam. 17 : 54) close to Saul's person (1 Sam. 17 : 32), as is to be expected from chapter 16. On the other hand, the verses omitted from the Septuagint give a different David story, of a shepherd lad still unknown when his father sent him to camp with provisions. He volunteers to fight, is victor, is retained at court, and becomes the bosom friend of Jonathan.

How are we to explain such things? The answer is, in several ways, perhaps. (1) Either the Septuagint has

the true text, and the Hebrew additions are interpolations of fragments from a "lost" history of David which have been put into the Hebrew text by accident or ignorance in the process of compilation; or (2) the Septuagint has deliberately omitted this passage, 1 Samuel 17 : 12-31, 41, 50 and 17 : 55 to 18 : 5. But the query arises, Could simple omission, made without changing a word of what was left, produce a complete and consecutive narrative? For verse 32 follows verse 11 more smoothly than does verse 12. On the other hand, verses 12-31 are self-contained and tell a perfectly natural story. Again, verses 1-11 are part of a history of public affairs, while 12-31 are part of a biography of David. Moreover, the king's promise of riches and his daughter (1 Sam. 17 : 25) is first referred to in a conversation with David, and that promise suggests that the narrative in verses 12-31 is a fragment foreign to the main narrative of the book of Samuel. For though David did finally marry the king's daughter, he did not receive her as a reward for slaying this Philistine, but for an exploit among the Philistines. (1 Sam. 18 : 22-29.) Hence, on the whole, it seems more reasonable to conclude that the Septuagint has not arbitrarily omitted these verses, but rather that they have been interpolated in the Hebrew text with verses 15, 16 as an editor's attempt to reconcile differences and explain difficulties.

What, now, is the meaning of Bible translation for us? Of course it raises difficulties, especially if we have been accustomed to depend upon the very letter of Scripture. And perhaps we expose ourselves to the criticism of our Roman Catholic friends when they suggest that translation by individuals leads to vagaries and all sorts of "isms." On the other hand, does it not rather suggest the marvelous capacity of the Bible for translation, not

only into the various dialects of earth, but also into the language of each individual soul? Indeed, we were better off in this matter to adopt the attitude of mind expressed by the King James Revisers, who reveal a wonderfully modern spirit in their quaint old language on this point:⁵

Translation it is that openeth the window; to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtaine, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooveth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water, even as *Jacob* rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flockes of *Laban* were watered. Indeed—without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at *Jacob's* well (which was deepe) without a bucket or some thing to draw with: or as that person mentioned by *Esay*, to whom when a sealed booke was delivered, with this motion, *Reade this, I pray thee*, hee was faine to make this answer, *I cannot, for it is sealed*.

⁵ The Authorized Version of the Bible, in Cambridge English Classics, I, Preface, p. 13f.

VI

EARLY TRANSLATORS: JEROME

Study Outline

1. Read the article "Vulgate" (with cross references) in any good Bible dictionary or encyclopedia and describe the version in its external history and character as a translation.

2. Look up in encyclopedias and histories the life-story of Jerome and familiarize yourself with the outlines of that life.

3. Study the history of the Roman Empire during the Græco-Roman period with special reference to the account of the spread of the Greek language during the early centuries of the Christian era.

4. Read (aloud, if possible) in the appendix to this book some of the selections from the Vulgate, and try to frame an idea of the character of the Latin language as there reflected.

5. Compare closely some of the selections from the Vulgate as given in the appendix with the same passages in the English Bible (Authorized Version, if possible), and try to tell how the Vulgate has influenced the rhythm and sound of the English Bible.

Scripture References and Helps

John 19 : 19f.; Acts 28 : 30f.; Revelation 15 : 1; 5 : 11-14; 1 Corinthians 15 : 42; Genesis 1 : 1-3.

Breasted, "Ancient Times," pp. 630-631 and 642-658.

Price, "Ancestry of Eng. Bible," pp. 74-84.

Lewis, "How the Bible Grew," pp. 128-168.

Gardiner, "Bible as English Literature," pp. 293-310.

Hastings' Bible Dict., vol. IV, pp. 873-890; 1 vol. ed., pp. 960-964; also art. "Greece," p. 315.

Encyclopedias, art. "Vulgate," "Versions," "Jerome."

Standard Bible Dict., art. "Versions," II, Other Versions of Old Testament, p. 891f.

Between the Septuagint and our English Bible lies another remarkable version, the Latin Vulgate. In the form given to it by Jerome this version has mightily influenced European life, and therefore we ought to know its place in the making of our Bible. But the Vulgate was preceded by what scholars have designated as the Old Latin translations and was itself a revision of these older versions.

The Roman Empire was for many years bilingual. Greek and Latin flourished side by side, the latter as the official language of the Empire and the former as the language of daily intercourse in non-official circles. In Palestine there would naturally be a third, the Aramaic, a dialect of the common people closely related to Hebrew, so that we are not surprised to find these three languages reflected in Pilate's inscription on the cross. (John 19 : 19f.) Christianity came to the West in Greek dress. Soon after the middle of the first century A. D. we find Paul in Rome preaching to all who would hear him. (Acts 28 : 30f.) By the end of this century the Roman church seems to have won a leading place, since one of its bishops, Clement, wrote on behalf of the church a letter to the church at Corinth to settle some difficulties there.

But though Clement had a Latin name, he wrote in Greek the letter known as First Clement among the Apostolic Fathers. Still later the "Shepherd" of Hermas and the writings of Justin Martyr and others appeared at Rome in Greek. Even the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, wrote his "Meditations" in Greek, and Irenæus, the great Christian bishop of Lyons, toward the end of the second century A. D. used the same language. Moreover, if the lower and perhaps the middle classes were recruited in some considerable measure from Greek-speaking peoples, this would be additional reason for the wide-spread use of Greek by those from among whom Christianity made its most numerous converts.

So we may not after all find the beginnings of Latin versions at Rome, much as we should expect to look to the capital of the Roman world for the origin of the Latin Bible. Some scholars hold that Latin translations of the Scriptures were first made at Antioch in Syria and thence were carried westward.¹ But others find in Africa the original home of the Old Latin translations. Here Latin was probably from early times the language of both official life and common daily intercourse among the people,² and Latin translations of the Scriptures would not only be required soon after the introduction of Christianity into Northern Africa, but they would also find readers as soon as they could be published. But just when the parts of the Bible were first translated into Latin it is impossible to tell, perhaps soon after the middle of the second century A. D.

There is not now in existence, so far as is known today, a single complete Old Latin Bible among the rather

¹ Cf. Kennedy, Hastings' Bible Dict., Vol. III, p. 53f., art. "Latin Versions, the Old."

² Cf. Breasted, "Ancient Times," p. 647.

numerous manuscripts of the Old Latin versions. We know it in the form of quotations made from it by the early Latin Church Fathers, and in a number of fragmentary manuscripts. These witnesses to the text of the Old Latin Bible show that as a translation it was free and often rough, and existed in such a variety of renderings as to be confusing and unsatisfactory. Indeed, the great Augustine complained of the *Latinarum interpretum infinita varietas* and declared ³ that

those who have translated the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be numbered, but the Latin translators cannot, for every one into whose hands a Greek manuscript came in the first periods of the Christian faith, and who fancied that he had some skill in both languages, ventured to translate.

This diversity of rendering and freedom in translation was often the source of complaint and trouble, and paved the way for the revision which became the Bible of all Western Christendom for over a thousand years and powerfully influenced all European life through the long medieval period. This revision was the version known as the Vulgate.

This version was the work of an early scholar named Jerome, who was well fitted for his task. Born of well-to-do Christian parents about the middle of the fourth century A. D. at Stridon, in what is now Czecho-Slovakia, he was well educated first at home and then later sent to Rome to study under one of the celebrated grammarians of the Empire. He read the great Latin authors, Terence, Vergil, and Cicero, became familiar with Greek literature, and studied rhetoric under a renowned teacher who in his old age became a convert to Christianity.

³ Quoted by Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," p. 75.

Jerome traveled widely also, both in the West and in the East. It is said that while he was at Antioch in Syria he was taken with a fever, during the course of which a dream made a deep impression upon him and changed the course of his life. He dreamed that he was before the judgment-seat of Christ. Asked who he was, he replied that he was a Christian. At once came back the stern rebuke:⁴ "You deceive yourself, you are a Ciceronian, not a Christian; for where your treasure is, there also is your heart."

In spite of this, however, Jerome's classical training gave him a fine instinct for language and proved a great advantage for his life-work as a translator of the Scriptures into Latin. In search of solitude in the summer of A. D. 374 he moved to a desert place east of Antioch, where he spent five years in self-discipline and study. He learned Hebrew from a rabbi who had been converted to Christianity, was later ordained presbyter in the church at Antioch, moved to Constantinople, and in 382 returned to Rome to live for about two years in close relations with the bishop of Rome, Damasus, who appealed to the great Christian scholar to undertake the task of preparing a better version of the Bible. Jerome could say he was widely popular in Rome and regarded as a scholar, but he foresaw the bitter criticism and hostility such an undertaking would arouse.

You urge me to revise the old Latin version [he says in the Preface to the Gospels, addressed to Damasus], and, as it were, to sit in judgment on the copies of the Scriptures which are now scattered throughout the world and, inasmuch as they differ from one another, you would have me decide which of them agrees with the Greek original. The labor is one of love, but at

⁴ White, art. "Vulgate," in Hastings' Dict., Vol. IV, p. 873b.

the same time both perilous and presumptuous; for in judging others I must be content to be judged by all; and how can I dare to change the language of the world in its hoary old age, and carry it back to the early days of its infancy? Is there a man, learned or unlearned, who, when he takes the volume into his hands, and perceives that what he reads does not suit his settled tastes, will not break out immediately into violent language, and call me a forger and a profane person for having the audacity to add anything to the ancient books, or to make any changes or corrections therein.⁵

Jerome's first task was simply to revise existing Latin versions, correcting the Old Latin text in the New Testament by the aid of the best Greek manuscripts and in the Old Testament by the best text of the Septuagint. As the Gospels were used for the public reading he seems to have begun with this portion of the New Testament and most naturally to have followed this with the revision of the Psalms in the Old Testament, since these were needed for the services of the church. But the work of revision was interrupted by the death of his friend and patron, Damasus, and the accession of a new bishop who did not care at all for the improvement of Scripture. Jerome continued his work, however, but removed from Rome to the East. He settled finally at Bethlehem, and there took up his task in earnest, no longer merely a revision of existing Latin Bibles, but a new translation from Hebrew and Greek originals, translating the whole Bible faithfully into a fine Latin, which was destined to remain for hundreds of years the accepted form of Scripture for the Western Christian world.

The Latin of the Vulgate is not, of course, the literary Latin of the classical period, although, as above noted, Jerome was familiar with the classical writers of Rome.

⁵ Quoted by Lewis, "How the Bible Grew," p. 147f.

We do not find the author of the Vulgate imitating Cicero, yet his fine ability as a linguist has been well-nigh universally recognized. One simple illustration will suggest the direction in which the later Latin developed away from the early classical style. Our first days in the high school in the study of this language were made hard because of our difficulty in learning to hold the verb till the end of the sentence, as in classical Latin authors we read. But Jerome did not pattern after that stiff and formidable style in the making of his sentences. He followed what was to his contemporaries in their daily life and what seems to us nowadays a more natural order. Notice this feature in the following brief passages from the Vulgate: *Et vidi aliud signum in caelo magnum et mirabile*, "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and wonderful" (Rev. 15 : 1). Once more we read a verse from Paul's impassioned argument on the resurrection: *Sic et resurrectio mortuorum. Seminatur in corruptione, surget in incorruptione*: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor. 15 : 42). Again, the very first verses of the Bible show the same simplicity of word-order. *In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram. Terra autem erat inanis et vacua, et tenebrae erant super faciem abyssi; et Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas*: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. But the earth was without form and void, and darknesses were upon the face of the abyss; and the Spirit of God was borne upon the waters" (Gen. 1 : 1-3).

If now we ask more closely as to the character of this wonderful version, we shall get a better answer by studying its influence upon our own English versions. Such influence is difficult to measure, but if we are willing to be

at pains to recall our Latin and compare the Vulgate with the King James Bible, we shall get a rather vivid impression of the influence of the Latin upon the English. For Professor Gardiner has pointed this out clearly, showing that our seventeenth century English translators were steeped in the language of the Vulgate. They seem to have transferred to their English much more than the meanings of words—the rhythm and sonorousness of the Vulgate Latin. To compare only a few passages of the English and Latin is to see something of the character of the Vulgate and to feel how much its stateliness and music have influenced our Bible. Gardiner compares the two versions in Revelation 5 : 11-14 and feels⁶ that “the prevalence of such resonant phrases as *vocem angelorum multorum, honorem et gloriam, in saecula saeculorum*, makes this passage almost an anthem as it stands; and its grave sonorousness is a palpable utterance of the awe and reverence which man feels in the presence of an almighty God.” Here are the passages arranged in parallel columns for comparison:

Et vidi, et audiui vocem Angelorum multorum in circuitu throni, et animalium et seniorum; et erat numerus eorum millia millium,

Dicentium voce magna: Dignus est Agnus, qui occisus est, accipere virtutem et divinitatem, et sapientiam et fortitudinem, et honorem et gloriam, et benedictionem.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands:

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

⁶ Gardiner, “Bible as Literature,” p. 305f.

Et omnem creaturam, quae in coelo est, et super terram et sub terra, et quae sunt in mari, et quae in eo, omnes audiui dicentes: Sedit in throno, et Agno: Benedictio et honor, et gloria et potestas in saecula saeculorum.

Et quatuor animalia dicebant: Amen. Et viginti quatuor seniores ceciderunt in facies suas et adoraverunt viventem in saecula saeculorum.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

So we have come to feel that our English Bible owes a large debt to the Vulgate, and that much of its matchless beauty and power come from the Latin of Jerome. This has long been recognized and was beautifully expressed by the translators of the King James Bible, a tribute to the author of the Vulgate in which Christian people now generally unite: ⁷

This moved S. Jerome, a most learned Father and the best linguist without controversy, of his age, or of any that went before him, to undertake the translating of the Old Testament, out of the very fountains themselves: which he performed with evidence of great learning, judgment, industry, and faithfulness, that he hath forever bound the Church unto him, in a debt of special remembrance and thankfulness.

⁷ Cambridge English Classics, Reprint of Authorized Version of 1611, Preface, "Translators to the Reader," p. 16.

VII

THE COPYISTS: BASES OF THE TEXT

Study Outline

1. Look up in encyclopedias and Bible dictionaries the articles on "Versions" and consider how they form a basis of our English Bible.

2. Look up in the references some of the early Church Fathers, and consider how their quotations of Scripture help scholars now to establish the text of the Bible.

3. Find what information you can in the references about the important manuscripts of the Bible, mastering in outline the story of such manuscripts as Codex Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, Bezae, Sinaiticus, Washington, and others.

4. Read the account of the modern discovery of the papyri, and tell what they contribute toward our information about the bases of the Bible.

5. What can you say of the character of these textual witnesses and their contribution to our conception of the Bible?

Scripture References and Helps

Genesis 6 : 3; Psalm 139 : 7f.; Matthew 5 to 7; 19 : 17; 3 : 7; 7 : 18; Luke 2 : 2; John 20 : 10, 25; 3 : 5; Genesis 49 : 10f.; Mark 16 : 14, 15.

Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," Ch. II, XIII, XIV.

Cobern, "New Archeological Discoveries," pp. 3-97, 132-210.

Gregory, "Canon and Text of the New Testament," pp. 329-353.

Bible dicts. and encyclopedias, arts. "Versions," "Fathers," "Papyri," "Manuscripts" (also the "Helps" in Teachers' Bibles).

Conley, "Bible in Modern Light," pp. 58-74.

Lake, "Text of the New Testament," pp. 11-21, 22-46.

Vincent, "History of Textual Criticism," pp. 8-41.

H. D. B., 1 vol. ed., pp. 909-911, §§7-20, art. "Texts, Versions, Languages of Old Testament"; pp. 916-924, §§1-32, "Text of New Testament."

Standard Bible Dict., art. "New Testament Text," §§1-4, pp. 580, 581; art. "Old Testament Text," §§1-8, pp. 601-603.

The primary object of the great versions just studied was, of course, to enable people who did not know the original to read the Scriptures in a tongue spoken by them. But now for us today they serve another end. With other translations they have become valuable witnesses to the text of Scripture and provide scholars with readings which serve to throw light upon obscure passages. In so far the versions become one of the bases of our modern Bible, and the Revised Version not infrequently appeals to their variant readings. So, for example, the marginal note to Genesis 6 : 3, where we read: "Or, rule in. Acc to Sept., Vulg., and Syr., abide in."

A second basis for the Bible, as we know it, is to be found in the quotations from Scripture made by early Christian leaders who followed our New Testament writers. They are commonly known as Church Fathers, and

their quotations of Biblical passages are called patristic citations. Of these the most important are early, though as a rule loose, seldom giving the exact words of Scripture in the form we have it. Unfortunately for the general reader the revisers of the American Standard Version have not indicated their sources of readings so far as to mention the Church Fathers. Yet some of them are of such importance as to justify a few illustrative quotations from, or rather reflections of, the Bible as found in their writings.

Clement of Rome, writing to the Corinthians about the end of the first century, quotes both the Old and New Testaments, sometimes accurately, sometimes inaccurately, and sometimes so vaguely as to be in effect a mere allusion. Here is a reasonably accurate quotation of a familiar passage, though Clement does not indicate its place in Scripture:

For somewhere the Scripture says, "Where shall I go, and where shall I conceal myself from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I go away to the ends of the earth, there is thy right hand; if I make my bed in the abyss, there is thy spirit" (1 Clem. 28 : 3, quoting Ps. 139 : 7f.).

And, again, quoting familiar New Testament passages, he shows the other characteristic:

For he spoke thus, "Show mercy, that you may receive mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven you; as you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you give, so shall it be given unto you; as you judge, so shall you be judged; as you are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you; with what measure you measure, with it shall it be measured unto you" (1 Clem. 13 : 2, quoting from the Sermon on the Mount).

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, a few years later than Clement, writing to the Christians of ancient Philadelphia,

shows somewhat more freedom in his method of treating Scripture. "For it (the Spirit) knows whence it comes and whither it goes" (Ignatius, Philadelphians 7 : 1, reflecting John 3 : 8). In similar fashion Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, reflects a considerable amount of Biblical material in varying degrees of verbal accuracy. In one passage he quotes Genesis as follows :

A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until shall come that for which he is set; and he shall be himself the expectancy of nations, binding his foal to a vine, washing his robe in the blood of a grape (Apology, 32 : 1, quoting Genesis 49 : 10f.).

These and many more similar quotations of Scripture in the Fathers suggest that while patristic citations have a greater value than hitherto admitted as a witness to the text of the Bible, they must be used with extreme care. When, however, they support the best manuscripts and versions, as they do at times, they give testimony to the correct text of the Bible that is invaluable. Such an instance of agreement of the best Fathers with the best versions and manuscripts is found in the Revised Version's reading of Matthew 19 : 17, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" where the margin gives a note: "Some ancient authorities read, Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God."

By this time the third and most important basis of the English Bible has suggested itself, the manuscripts. These are very numerous, amounting to thousands in all degrees of incompleteness, and consisting of both parchment and papyrus documents. These latter are fragmentary, yet because of their early date are of more than

passing interest. Some of the manuscripts, as in the case of the parchment or vellum codices, are written in capital letters (uncials), corresponding to hand-printed documents, while others are written in ordinary long hand and are called cursives.

The story of the modern discoveries of papyri is a romance. Relatively little was accomplished in this field of archeological discovery before 1890, when the long-lost work of Aristotle on the Constitution of Athens was brought to light. A few years later Doctor Grenfell and Doctor Hunt, excavating the site of ancient Oxyrhynchus, situated in the Fayum of Egypt, some one hundred and twenty miles south of Cairo, discovered vast numbers of Greek papyri and caused a sensation by the treasures from antiquity they were able to present to the world of scholars. Documents of all sorts were included in this epochal discovery; portions of the ancient classics, coroners' reports, official tax-lists, invitations to dinners, private letters, business accounts—a vast body of documents reflecting every-day life in the centuries just preceding and just after the beginning of the Christian era. Here is a sample dinner invitation of the second century A. D.:¹ “Antonius, son of Ptolemæus, invites you to dine with him at the table of the lord Serapis in the house of Claudius Serapion on the 16th at 9 o'clock.”

But naturally we are more particularly interested in the Biblical texts among these papyri, which date back at least a hundred years earlier than other known manuscripts of the New Testament. One of the earliest of these is a single leaf, written in capitals, dating from the third century A. D. It contains over half of the first chapter of Matthew. It is one of the oldest known manu-

¹ Milligan, “Greek Papyri,” No. 39, p. 97.

scripts of any part of the New Testament, and supports that type of text represented by the Westcott and Hort Greek Testament. Another papyrus text from this same century, perhaps a bit older than the one just mentioned, contains parts of chapters 8 and 9 of Paul's Letter to the Romans. The papyrus book of which this leaf was a part was only four and a half inches high by about two in width. The leaf is badly mutilated, but scholars have been able to read the familiar words: ²

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God . . . children of God. . . and if children . . . joint heirs . . . I am persuaded that neither death . . . nor powers . . . nor height . . . nor depth . . . shall be able to separate us.

One more of these recently found New Testaments is a fifth century Gospel fragment of nearly seven hundred lines. Cobern, in the work just cited above, gives a vivid description of this four-gospel Testament: ³

The Sermon on the Mount is given with almost absolute verbal perfection. . . In many other places there are slight variations in spelling. . . In Matthew 3 : 7 the scribe uses a synonym for "warned." . . In Luke 2 : 2 the name of the governor Quirinius is misspelled . . . in verse 25 (of John 20) a particle is inserted and in verse 10 the reading is "so they went back to the disciples." . . The only variation in sense in any passages is in Matthew 7 : 18, where instead of writing "neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit," this ancient copyist has written "neither can a good tree bring forth good fruit." The early Christian's love for his Bible is seen from the fact that instead of mutilating the text some reader far back in that ancient world has put in the margin—"sic!"

Of the many manuscripts we can notice but two or three. One of the most interesting is also one of the

² Cobern, "New Archeological Discoveries," p. 154f.

³ "New Archeological Discoveries," p. 159.

most recent "finds." In December, 1906, Mr. Freer, of Detroit, bought four great manuscripts of an Arab dealer in Gizeh, near Cairo. The third one of this group is a fine copy of the Gospels, ranking with the leading manuscripts of the world in age and completeness. This splendid New Testament gospel volume is now located at Washington, D. C., in the Smithsonian Institute and so in a peculiar manner belongs to the United States. It is referred to by the letter W in scholars' discussions of it. Its age is remarkable, the manuscript being not later than the sixth century A. D. and possibly as early as the fourth. It is written on parchment of good quality and was apparently intended for a magnificent copy. It contains 187 leaves (374 pages) written in one column, thirty lines to the page. The Gospels are practically complete and stand in the order, Matthew, John, Luke, Mark. The text of this copy of the Gospels is marked by numerous additions and some striking omissions as compared with that type presented in the Revisers' text, from which our Revised Version was translated. For instance, in Mark 16, between verses 14 and 15 W inserts an eccentric addition in which the disciples defend or excuse themselves and Jesus replies to that defense.

And they made excuse, saying, This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who by the unclean spirits, does not allow us power to comprehend the truth of God. Wherefore reveal thy righteousness at once, they said to the Christ. And the Christ answered them, Fulfilled is the limit of the years of Satan's authority, but other dangers are come near. And I was delivered unto death for sinners, that they might turn to the truth and no longer sin, in order that they might inherit the glory of righteousness, which (glory) is in heaven, spiritual and incorruptible.⁴

⁴ From Goodspeed's text, "Biblical World," March, 1908, pp. 218-226.

Naturally, critics are divided on the authenticity of the reading, such scholars as Goodspeed and Cobern feeling that the addition is so unlike Jesus' sayings and so different from other parts of Mark's Gospel as to be no original part of our second Gospel,⁵ while Moffatt says⁶ that the passage originally belonged to the section in which it stands, but was for some reason removed at an early date.

Another of the most important manuscripts of the Bible is a fourth-century codex in the Vatican Library at Rome and so named Vaticanus. It is designated by the letter B. This is generally regarded as on the whole the most valuable of all the manuscripts of the Greek Bible. It is written on fine vellum, in a small, neat capital (uncial) letter, with three narrow columns of writing to a page. The leaves are nearly ten inches square and number at present 759. It once contained, probably, all the Greek Bible complete, but in the vicissitudes through which it has passed it has lost considerable both from the Old Testament and from the New. There is a note of sadness in the history of this old Bible. Until recent years scholars were denied access to B. Its guardians for long years refused to publish its readings, and when they did, the work was so badly done as to be almost worthless. In 1843 the German scholar Tischendorf spent some months in Rome, but was permitted to study the manuscript for only six hours on two days. And an English textual critic spent nearly half the year 1845 in Rome, but was allowed only the privilege any traveler might expect—a brief glance at the treasure he so longed to study. In the case of B, too, scholars differ

⁵ "Biblical World," March, 1908, p. 223, and "New Archeological Discoveries," p. 164.

⁶ "New Translation of New Testament," p. 67.

as to the value of the text preserved, but some of the leading textual students of all times have regarded it as a close approximation to the very original text of Scripture, particularly in the New Testament.

But the romance of the history of textual criticism comes to its fullest expression in connection with the Sinaitic Greek Bible, last known to be at Petrograd. This is a vellum codex of 346½ leaves with the uncial writing in four columns to the page, dating from the fourth century. Its text is very much like that of Vaticanus. When the two agree, as they often do, they are regarded as of very high authority. In fact, it is primarily, if not entirely, to the influence of these two manuscripts together that the textual differences between the King James Bible and the Revised Version are due.

The story of the discovery of Sinaiticus has often been told but may be repeated here for its own sake. Tischendorf was the happy man to find this treasure. He tells of the discovery himself, as he was in the convent of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai, in the following simple but dramatic words: ⁷

I perceived in the middle of the great hall a large and wide basket full of old parchments; and the librarian, who was a man of information, told me that two heaps of papers like this moldered by time had been already committed to the flames. What was my surprise to find amid this heap of papers a considerable number of sheets of a copy of the Old Testament in Greek which seemed to me to be one of the most ancient I had ever seen. The authorities of the Convent allowed me to possess myself of a third of these parchments or about 45 sheets all the more readily as they were destined for the fire. But I could not get them to yield up possession of the remainder.

⁷ Quoted by Cobern, "New Archeological Discoveries," p. 133, from "Narrative of the Discovery of the Sinaitic Manuscript," 1866, p. 28

This was apparently the occasion of Tischendorf's first visit to this old convent. Some fifteen years later, in February of 1859, he went thither for a third search for the manuscript he felt sure was there, if he could only discover it. But the search was apparently to be in vain, as the other visits had been, for Tischendorf ordered the camels to be ready to take him away the following morning. The chief steward of the monastery invited him that night to his room for a last visit. As the eager manuscript hunter could talk of nothing else, the conversation turned inevitably to the subject. The steward declared that he too had a Septuagint manuscript and then took down from a shelf some old leaves wrapped up in a cloth and showed them to Tischendorf.

I unrolled the cover [continues the story] and discovered to my surprise not only those very fragments which fifteen years before I had taken out of the basket, but also other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and in addition the Epistle of Barnabas and a part of the "Pastor of Hermas." . . I knew that I held in my hands the most precious Biblical treasure in existence, a document whose age and importance exceeded that of all the manuscripts which I had ever examined during twenty years of study of the subject. . . On the 27th of September I returned to Cairo. The monks and archbishops then warmly expressed their thanks for my jealous efforts in their cause and the following day I received from them, under the form of a loan, the Sinaitic Bible to carry to St. Petersburg and there to have it copied as accurately as possible. I set out for Egypt early in October, and on the 19th of November I presented to their Imperial Majesties in the Winter Palace at Tsarkoe-Selo my rich collection of old Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, and other manuscripts in the middle of which the Sinaitic Bible shone like a crown.⁸

Such are the sources of supply for the text of our Bible today. They are often fragmentary, yet so numerous that

⁸ Cobern, *ibid.*, p. 134.

scholars have been enabled to supply what is lacking in one from the readings of others, and so restore what is generally admitted to be, in the case of the New Testament at least, a very close approach to the readings of the actual autographs. But the story of the manuscripts and versions reminds us again of the perishable character of the "earthen vessels" in which we have this treasure of God's revelation of himself to man, and inspires us to win by hard effort and unswerving devotion to the truth the message contained in the Scriptures. In this light the Bible becomes for us a "Promised Land" of truth which we must conquer and appropriate, if we are to enter into possession of its teachings, and we own of it only what we by earnest study and sympathetic appreciation make over into our spiritual life and vitalize with our own personality.

VIII

NEED OF A TEXT: MATERIALS FOR MAKING IT

Study Outline

1. Consider the marginal note on Jeremiah 10 : 11. Is this verse itself an early marginal note which has gotten copied into the text? See if you can find others like it.

2. Find some marginal notes in your Bible wherein Hebrew or Greek names and terms are explained: as Hosea 1 : 6; Acts 19 : 31 marg.

3. Look up any marginal notes on 1 Samuel 19 : 9 and find others giving similar variant translations of the same Hebrew or Greek words. Cf. Mark 7 : 3.

4. Find some variations in the margin of your Bible which can be adequately explained only as deliberate changes by scribes. Consider in this connection 2 Samuel 24 : 1 with 1 Chronicles 21 : 1. Notice also in this connection John 7 : 8, 10.

5. Study the variations recorded on Jeremiah 27 : 1 and Acts 8 : 37, and try to explain how such changes could arise.

6. Do the same with another class of variants, like Psalm 100 : 3; 1 Timothy 3 : 16. Find others, and explain how they have arisen.

7. Sum up in a brief statement the significance of such variations in the text of the Bible for the history of the Biblical text.

Scripture References and Helps

Judges 10 : 11; Matthew 12 : 40; John 7 : 53 to 8 : 11; Hosea 1 : 6, 9; Acts 9 : 36; 19 : 31; 8 : 37; Revelation 9 : 11; Exodus 34 : 13; Job 41 : 1; Matthew 5 : 46; Genesis 11 : 2; 13 : 11; Mark 7 : 3; 2 Kings 8 : 10; 20 : 7f.; 1 Chronicles 21 : 1; 2 Samuel 24 : 1; Judges 3 : 24; 4; 1 Samuel 24 : 3; 13 : 1; 12 : 11; 14 : 18; John 7 : 8, 10; 5 : 4; Jeremiah 27 : 1, 3, 12, 20; 28 : 1, 2; Psalm 100 : 3; Proverbs 10 : 10; 10 : 8; 1 Timothy 3 : 16; Isaiah 38 : 21f.

Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," pp. 1-12 and 20-35.

Gregory, "Canon and Text of the New Testament," pp. 508-528.

Vincent, "History of Textual Criticism," pp. 1-7.

Hastings' Dict. of Bible, 1 vol. ed., art. "Text, Versions, Languages of Old Testament," pp. 912-916, §§21-40; *ibid.*, "Text of the New Testament," pp. 927, 928, §§46-49.

The foregoing chapters have suggested the need of a well-established text of Scripture and also the source of valuable materials for the reconstruction of that text. If we were in possession of the original copies of Biblical books precisely as they left the hands of the writers in each instance, our task would be simply to translate these autographs as well as possible. But the bases of our Bible are manuscripts, versions, and patristic citations, transmitted in documents which have been copied over and over through hundreds of years. Almost inevitably errors of various kinds crept into the text; omissions, repetitions, additions, blunders, all causing variations from the original writing. Moreover, copyists very early began

to make comments about the text they were transcribing, and interpreters tried to explain the meaning of obscure passages. These comments and explanations were very naturally placed in the margins of the copies being made.

In very early times, because of the scarcity of writing materials, marginal notes were relatively few and brief. In Jeremiah 10 : 11 we have, in all probability, an instance of an early marginal note which was later copied into the body of the text. A modern marginal note on this verse warns us that it is written in Aramaic. This means that right in the midst of a passage in Hebrew this one verse is in a different dialect. Moreover, when we read the preceding and the following verses continuously, omitting this verse, we notice that its omission does not break the connection. Hence the verse looks like a marginal note introduced into the text by a later scribe. It may have been at first simply a note in the margin telling pious Jews, when invited to engage in the religious rites of their heathen neighbors, how to answer such invitations.¹ The same thing has happened in Isaiah 38 : 21f., where we are able to correct an insertion at a wrong place by a parallel passage. By comparing these verses in Isaiah with the corresponding passage in 2 Kings 20 : 7, 8 we learn the true place of the verses. The most natural explanation of the misplacement in Isaiah is that of a marginal addition afterward inserted by a scribe in the wrong place.

In the New Testament essentially the same thing has happened in Matthew 12 : 40, a copying into the text of an originally marginal explanation by some one of Christ's reference to Jewish literature. This is suggested by the divergences of Matthew 12 : 39-41 from the paral-

¹ Cf. Brown, "American Commentary on Jeremiah," p. 92.

lel passage in Luke 11 : 30-32 and the difficulties in the verse under consideration. Some early Christian teacher desired to explain what might seem obscure to some readers, and he therefore noted his explanation of the sign of Jonah in the margin of his copy. Later, but before the date of our earliest and best manuscripts of the New Testament, some other copyist, feeling the aptness of the explanation, wrote the note into the text of the transcript he was making, and thus the verse found its place in the midst of the words of Jesus. A longer passage reflecting substantially the same practise is found again in the section of the Gospel of John, 7 : 53 to 8 : 11. These verses do not appear in the Revised Version and probably did not belong to the original text of this Gospel. If on account of its intrinsic beauty and power the section was nevertheless written by some scribe at the end of his copy of this Gospel and later transferred by another copyist to what seemed to him a better place for it,² following 7 : 52, then we have here an instance of a marginal story copied into the text perhaps to be used in the early church, as it was later, for a lesson to people who repented and confessed their sins.³

In our English Bible the practise of adding such marginalia is said to have originated with Tindale,⁴ whose notes, at first explanatory, became later bitterly controversial. This custom continued in the important English Bibles following Tindale, until in the Genevan version explanatory notes and comments on the proper rendering of passages are a distinctive feature. In fact, the aim of the author of the Genevan New Testament was to omit

² Milligan, "New Testament Documents," p. 187.

³ Gregory, "Canon and Text of the New Testament," p. 515.

⁴ Scrivener, "The Authorized Edition of the English Bible," p. 40.

nothing "unexpounded, whereby he that is anything exercised in the Scriptures of God, might justly complain of hardness."⁵ But abuses crept in, and the practise became intolerable. Finally a reaction set in against marginal notes. This is seen in that one of the rules laid down for the guidance of the translators of the King James Bible:⁶ "No marginal note at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, be so briefly and fitly expressed in the text."

This suggestion affords us a convenient point of departure from which to begin a study of the materials for text-making, as found in the margin of an ordinary copy of the American Standard Version with references. For many of the marginal notes will be found to consist in such explanations of Hebrew and Greek words. In Hosea 1 : 6 the harsh name of the prophet's daughter is explained by a marginal note as, "That hath not obtained mercy," while Unloved's younger brother is given even a harsher name, *Lo-ammi*, "Not my people" (Hosea 1 : 9 and marg.). In Acts 9 : 36 a woman's Aramaic name is interpreted in Greek, which, as a marginal note tells us, signifies in English "Gazelle." And a note on Revelation 9 : 11 explains the Greek name of the angel of the abyss, leader of the hosts of demon-riders, as "Destroyer."

Sometimes these marginal notes explain terms not likely to be understood by the uninformed reader. In Exodus 34 : 13 the word *Asherim* is explained as a term for the wooden symbols of the goddess Asherah. So in Job 41 : 1 "leviathan" means crocodile, some think, while

⁵ Quoted in Westcott, "History of the English Bible," p. 91.

⁶ Cited in Westcott, "History of English Bible," p. 115.

in Matthew 5 : 46 the term "publicans" means "collectors or renters of Roman taxes"; and "Asiarchs" are said to be "officers having charge of festivals, etc., in the Roman province of Asia" (Acts 19 : 31 marg.).

Still another class of marginal notes consists in different renderings of the same expression, or attempts to make clear some term of the original. For instance, Genesis 11 : 2 reads, according to the Revised Version, "as they journeyed east," with a note, "Or, 'in the east.'" The King James version translated this expression, "from the east," the original 1611 edition having no marginal note attached, while in later editions of this same version we find a note to this effect, "Or, 'eastward.'" The same term, however, in Genesis 13 : 11 is translated by both the King James version and the Revised Version simply as "east," with no marginal note at all. In the New Testament Mark 7 : 3 gives us a striking note, a comment by the translators on a Greek expression they wished to emphasize. The Revised Version reads, "except they wash their hands diligently," the note being, "Or, 'up to the elbow. Gr. with the fist.'" But the original King James edition rendered the expression by these words, "except they wash their hands oft," adding the following interesting note: "Or, 'diligently, in the Originall, with the fist: Theophilact, up to the elbow.'"

But there are other variants in the margins of our Bible, more significant than the foregoing for the history of this wonderful book. These are notes of various kinds which have grown out of the copying of documents by ancient scribes. As the manuscripts were copied over and over again changes crept into the text in great number and variety. For purposes of this study our illustrative examples of variants due to scribal changes may be

gathered up in the large into two groups, intentional changes and unintentional.

The editors of the Jewish Version say on this matter,⁷ "The Rabbis enumerate eighteen instances in which the scribes consciously altered the text." By these intentional changes are meant those variations in the text of Scripture for which we get an adequate explanation only by assuming a deliberate intention on the part of a scribe to alter a reading. To this class will belong such changes as we find in a marginal note attached to 2 Kings 8 : 10, noticed in a previous chapter. Again, in 1 Chronicles 21 : 1 as compared with 2 Samuel 24 : 1 we find what appears to be a deliberate change on the part of a later writer following an earlier as his source. In the Samuel passage it is Jehovah who, moved with anger against Israel, stirs up David to number the people. If, now, it seemed offensive to the Chronicler that Jehovah could be considered the direct instigator of an act regarded as sinful, his change to Satan ("Or, 'an adversary'") as the prime mover of the wrong act, though deliberate, is nevertheless plain. It is an intentional change for theological reasons. Once more, such passages as Judges 3 : 24, 1 Samuel 24 : 3, and others, fall into this class, since some indelicate word or expression is deliberately replaced with some euphemistic phraseology. That passage in the New Testament already cited, John 7 : 8, 10, probably belongs in this class of deliberate changes in the text. The variation may have been introduced to save the reputation of Jesus. For Porphyry, a third century A. D. non-Christian philosopher, accused Jesus of deceit in this statement. Hence, in order to answer that charge some copyist may well have changed a simple Greek

⁷ Jewish Version, Philadelphia, 5677-1917, Preface, p. X.

negative into a compound one, thus freeing the narrative of the seeming difficulty. This would make the change an intentional variation.

Textual variants of the second class are of various kinds. Early scribes were not always as careful of the text of Scripture as has sometimes been supposed, nor were they as intelligent in their handling of it as many have believed. 1 Samuel 13 : 1 is a good illustration, though a difficult verse. In the Revised Version the passage reads: "Saul was (forty) years old when he began to reign," and a marginal note says that "the number is lacking in the Hebrew text, and is supplied conjecturally." The King James translators did not seem to know what to do with the verse, for they rendered it, "Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel," with a note in the margin giving as the Hebrew, "the son of one year in his reigning." This would make the Hebrew read, "Son of a year (was) Saul in his reigning, and (he was) two (?) years king over Israel." The verse is omitted by the Septuagint altogether. How is the form of the verse to be explained? The Hebrew of it is well-nigh incomprehensible, and the English of it without some conjectural addition is senseless. Has not some copyist blundered in transcribing this verse? Similarly, 1 Samuel 12 : 11 tells of Israel's release from the hand of her foes under the leadership of such heroes as Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel. But a marginal note informs us that "Bedan" is "Acc. to Sept. and Syr. Barak." And as we read the story of Barak's achievements in Judges 4, comparing that account with this recital by Samuel, we feel that the name Bedan has been ignorantly or carelessly written into Samuel's address to Israel. And the same explanation

comes naturally for a similar variant in the text of Jeremiah 27 : 1. This verse, as it reads, gives Jehoiakim as the name of the king in whose reign this prophetic recommendation of submission to Babylon was preached. But a note in the margin on this verse suggests that Zedekiah should have been written instead of Jehoiakim. And verses 3, 12, 20 of this chapter and 1 of chapter 28 show that the correction is necessary. Possibly this is an "error of memory," due to the attempt of the copyist to carry in mind the thought rather than the exact words he was copying.⁸ It may, however, just as probably be an error due to the scribe's ignorance, or carelessness, for 27 : 1 is practically a repetition of 26 : 1. It is interesting to note in passing that the Septuagint omits the first verse of chapter twenty-seven altogether.

A somewhat similar instance in the New Testament may be found in the passage about the periodic descent of the angel to trouble the waters of the pool of Bethesda for the healing of the sick. (John 5 : 4.) The Revised Version omits this verse entirely, with a marginal note saying that "many ancient authorities insert wholly or in part 'waiting for the moving of the water: 4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water. Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole, with whatsoever disease he was holden.'" Yet these words are correctly omitted. In the text of the older version it would seem as if there had been a double addition. First, the clause "waiting for the moving of the water" may have been added, perhaps in the margin, in order to give point to the sick man's remark in verse 7, "when the water is troubled." Then later another scribe, some-

⁸ Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," p. 29.

what indifferent, perhaps ignorant, feeling the need of additional explanation and filled with popular superstition, copied the marginal explanation into the text and added the tradition of the angelic troubling of the waters of the pool. Another illustration of the same thing is found in the parallel case of the baptismal confession of the Eunuch in Acts 8 : 37. This too is omitted by the Revised Version. This variation is interesting because it found its way into the text from which the King James Bible was translated from Erasmus' editions. He found the reading in the margin of one of his manuscripts and felt that it had been omitted from the text "by the carelessness of scribes."⁹ He therefore transferred it from the margin to the body of the text which he was then printing.

A second class of variants unintentionally caused may be designated as errors of ear and eye. These would occur where one person was dictating to a number of scribes, or where the copyist read one line for another. Take the variant in Psalm 100 : 3. The text of the verse reads, "It is he that hath made us, and we are his." The marginal note on this verse tells us, "Another reading is, 'And not we ourselves.'" A literal translation of the Hebrew in this expression will make it clear how two scribes could hear the same sounds but write down two different words. The clause in the text reads literally, "He hath made us, And to him we." The marginal variant is literally, "He hath made us, And not we." The words "and to him" and "and not" sound alike in the Hebrew, and this variant probably arose when, on the occasion of some one's dictating to a number of scribes,

⁹ Westcott and Hort, "New Testament in Greek," II, Notes on Selected Readings, p. 93.

one wrote "and to him we" while another put down "and not we."¹⁰ Perhaps it was the scribe's eye that misled him in the variant in Proverbs 10 : 10. We read:

"He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow;
But a prating fool shall fall."

But this second line is also the second member of the parallelism in verse 8, where the contrast is between the wise in heart and the foolish of lips, though some hold that even there it is out of place.¹¹ But here in verse 10 the contrast expected is that between one who makes trouble by insinuation and malicious hints, and the wise man who does the opposite, who makes for peace by straightforward, friendly criticism. And this is just what is found in the Septuagint:

"He who winks deceitfully with his eye causes sorrow
to men,
But he who reproves openly makes peace."

How, now, are we to account for this variant? Professor Price suggests that this second member, about frank reproof for wrong, was omitted by a scribe and then later the omission was supplied by another copyist from the second member of verse 8.¹²

Again, a third class of changes appears in the failure of scribes to catch the sense of passages they are transcribing. A possible illustration of this sort of variations is found in 1 Samuel 14 : 18: "And Saul said unto Ahijah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel." The margin

¹⁰ Price, "Ancestry of the English Bible," p. 29.

¹¹ Toy, "International Critical Commentary on Proverbs," p. 204.

¹² "Ancestry of the English Bible," p. 28.

has a note on this verse: "Some editions of Sept. have, 'Bring hither the ephod. For he wore the ephod at that time before Israel.'" Perhaps this represents a deliberate change and should be so classified. Possibly, however, the Greek translator of the passage failed to understand the Hebrew correctly and so introduced the change into his Greek text.

In the New Testament, 1 Timothy 3 : 16 seems to be an illustration of this same thing. A note on this verse calls attention to the Revised Version's change from "God" to "He who," asserting that the reading of the older version "rests on no sufficient evidence." And the best manuscripts are against the older version's reading "God." Some copyist apparently failed to catch the true meaning of the passage and changed a relative pronoun in his exemplar to the noun "God." The verse appears to be a quotation from a primitive hymn in praise of Christ. If so, the relative pronoun would be accounted for by the influence of its proper antecedent. But the absence of this antecedent would leave a neuter noun (mystery) before the relative, and the copyist, seeing this neuter noun and not reading the passage very carefully, would feel that he was at the beginning of a new sentence. So he would change the relative pronoun to "God," in order to begin a new sentence, a very slight alteration in the Greek. All he would have to do in order to effect the change would be to draw a transverse line through the first letter of the relative and a bar above its two letters. Thus *OC* becomes *OC*, "who" is changed to "God." Now it is significant that early manuscripts, versions, and quotations of this text in the Fathers are against this change, and common sense is against it also. People would not naturally apply the verbs in the verse

to God. Hence we see the wisdom of the revisers in returning to what was probably an original relative, "Who," or "He who." Doctor Vaughn says of this passage: ¹³

The Revised Version of the New Testament says this to us—and if it were its only change, it would have been worth ten years of labor: The mystery of godliness, the revealed secret which has in it "reverence," the right feeling and attitude of the soul toward God its Author and Object of being, is a Person—incarnate, attested, heralded, believed, glorified—a Person whom to know is life, whom to serve is freedom. He is not a doctrine, nor a book, nor a creed, nor a church—He is a Person.

Thus one might go on almost indefinitely, for the number of such variants in the Bible is very large. The variations began early and continued to multiply until the days of printing. Yet the large number of variations in the text of the Bible need not disconcert Christians. In fact, it rather suggests the abundance of the materials which constitute the evidence for the text of Scripture. There is no other text from antiquity so well supported as the text of our Bible. Speaking of the New Testament, Doctor Hort, one of the world's foremost textual students of this text, says: ¹⁴

The proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less, on a rough computation, than seven-eighths of the whole. The remaining eighth therefore, formed in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities, constitutes the whole area of criticism. . . In this second estimate the proportion of comparatively trivial variations is beyond measure larger than in the former: so that the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text.

¹³ Quoted by Schaff, "Companion to Greek New Testament," p. 201f.

¹⁴ "The New Testament in Greek," II, Intro., p. 2.

IX

CONSTRUCTING THE TEXT

Study Outline

1. From your previous study what can you say of changes or corruptions in the Biblical text? How early did such changes creep in?

2. Look up the life-story of Erasmus, and tell what he did for the establishment of the New Testament text.

3. Read the article "Textual Criticism" in any good encyclopedia and give a brief summary of the progress of textual criticism of the Bible.

4. From your reading about Codex Bezae and Codex Washington earlier in this study tell briefly the outstanding characteristics of the type of text embodied in these manuscripts.

5. Compare briefly the types of text represented by the manuscripts upon which the Authorized Version and the Revised Version are based.

Scripture References and Helps

1 John 5 : 7, 8; Acts 10 : 25f.; Luke 6 : 4; 22 : 19f.; 24 : 53; Mark 9 : 49; 16 : 9-20; John 7 : 53 to 8 : 11.

Price, "Ancestry of English Bible," pp. 189-206.

Lake, "The Text of the New Testament," pp. 1-10 and 59-91.

Gregory, "Canon and Text of the New Testament," pp. 479-508.

Vincent, "History of Textual Criticism," pp. 1-7 and 48-156.

H. B. D., 1 vol. ed., art. "Text of the New Testament," pp. 924-927, §§33-45.

Peake, "The Bible, Its Origin, Significance, and Abiding Worth," pp. 76-87.

Standard Bible Dict., art. "New Testament Text," §5, p. 581f.

The witnesses to the Biblical text are many, numbering well up in the thousands. The variations arising in these thousands of authorities amount to hundreds of thousands. At first disquieting, this fact becomes our greatest assurance for the correctness of modern Biblical texts, since the more numerous the witnesses the better the restoration. The task of the textual critic is to bring out of this mass of divergent and often conflicting readings the actual words of the original writers, or as close an approximation thereto as is humanly possible. How have scholars gone about this work?

Of course, attempts at criticism began very early, since alterations in the text of Scripture were made soon after the books were written. There can be little doubt that wilful corruptions of the text soon crept in, since the earlier apologists allude to such practises. Irenæus, before the close of the second century A. D., declares,¹ "The others, though they acknowledge the Scriptures, pervert their interpretation." And Tertullian, of North Africa, says:² "Marcion has used a sword, not a pen; while Valentinus has both added and taken away." This corruption of the text went on apace, till near the close

¹ "Against Heresies," III, 12.

² "De Præscript. Haer.," p. 38.

of the fourth century Jerome could write to Pope Damasus: ³

You urge me to revise the Old Latin version, and, as it were, to sit in judgment on the copies of the Scriptures which are now scattered throughout the world; and, inasmuch as they differ from one another, you would have me decide which of them agree with the Greek original. . . For, if we are to pin our faith to the Latin texts, it is for our opponents to tell us which; for there are almost as many forms of the text as there are copies. If, on the other hand, we are to glean the truth from a comparison of many, why not go back to the original Greek and correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake.

Such corruptions of the text of Scripture called forth attempts at correction very early, but little was done in the way of real criticism of the Biblical text before the modern era. What was done in the first centuries and during the Middle Ages was more in the nature of a discussion of various readings with comments on the relative value of manuscripts and the number of witnesses to a given reading. For the beginnings of the science of textual criticism we must come down to the revival of learning in Western Europe and the invention of printing.

The history of the printed text of the New Testament begins at the opening of the sixteenth century. Desiderius Erasmus, of Rotterdam, vagrant scholar of Europe, felt that the Christian religion had become an observance of formalities and a neglect of duties. The Christian Scriptures, intoned in the churches by mumbling priests, were made unintelligible to the masses. Copies of the Bible were rare and were generally kept away from the people.

³ Quoted in Lewis, "How the Bible Grew," p. 147f.

Erasmus wanted to give the New Testament in its original language to the world, in order to arouse Europe to its sad condition. In addition to the Greek text he projected a new Latin translation to accompany the Greek, and copious notes on special passages in order to give point to the application of Scripture to the customs and usages of the day. He labored patiently for some time upon this epoch-making book. "It was finished at last," says Froude,⁴

text and translation printed, and the living facts of Christianity, the persons of Christ and the apostles, their history, their lives, their teaching were revealed to an astonished world. For the first time the laity were able to see, side by side, the Christianity which converted the world, and the Christianity of the Church and a Borgia pope, cardinal princes, ecclesiastical courts, and a mythology of lies. The effect was to be a spiritual earthquake.

Erasmus revised his Greek Testament several times and by these different editions powerfully influenced the history of the New Testament text, not always wisely, however. In the 1522 revision he added the passage about the three heavenly witnesses (1 John 5 : 7, 8), inserting at the end of verse 7 (which is the end of verse 6 in the Authorized Version) "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," and in verse 8 the words "in earth." This he did simply because in a controversy with an opponent he had promised to insert the words if they could be found in a Greek manuscript. They were found, sure enough, in a clumsy form, retranslated into Greek from Latin, in a sixteenth century manuscript, and Erasmus, true to a thoughtless promise, added the passage in his third edition.

⁴ "Life and Letters of Erasmus," p. 119f.

But a text so made and so based on a few late manuscripts could not long satisfy advancing scholarship. Other scholars followed Erasmus, and numerous revisions of the Greek New Testament were brought out during the century following his third edition. Of these, those by Estienne, of Paris, are important, especially his third edition of 1550, embodying substantially the type of text that later became the basis of the King James Bible. Estienne's fourth edition, 1551, is noted as being the first to appear with the text divided into verses such as have since become so familiar. This device undoubtedly helped to popularize the Greek Testament, and the growing commercial spirit of the age seized upon the Biblical text as a means of making money. For before the middle of the seventeenth century there were published in Holland some editions so handy in size as to become popular at once. The preface of the second of these continental Greek Testaments, the Elzevirs, contained the words, *Textum ergo habes nunc ab omnibus receptum* ("You have therefore now the text received by all"), a statement giving name to the Received Text, a type of text which was venerated with almost idolatrous reverence down to the close of the nineteenth century and which gave form to our Protestant translations before the days of the critical text upon which the Revised Version is based.

After this early period of beginnings, which gave Western Europe its Bible in the original Hebrew and Greek, as well as several vernacular translations, the history of textual criticism is largely the story of emancipation from the domination of the Received Text. For the next two hundred years scholars busied themselves with the collection of various textual readings from new manuscripts as these were discovered, and gradually amassed the

textual materials that resulted in the revision of the New Testament text toward the close of the nineteenth century. Among these gatherers of materials Dr. John Mill, of Oxford, early in the eighteenth century, published a Greek Testament, the text of which, while substantially like that of Estienne's 1550 edition, was nevertheless accompanied by readings from seventy-eight additional manuscripts and several of the ancient versions. Besides this, Mill was the first to collect the textual evidence of patristic citations to any noteworthy extent. These materials thus gathered were already so numerous, however, as to bring criticism upon the method and in particular, after Mill's death, upon his edition of the New Testament. But a brilliant fellow worker, Richard Bentley, while admitting that Mill's method clogged the New Testament with variations, defended vigorously the principle of textual criticism and made a plea for the determination of the text on the basis of all the evidence apart from the dominance of any printed edition. Describing Estienne as the Protestant pope and asserting that Catholicism had no one competent to guide the revision of the Vulgate's text, he wrote:⁵

The New Testament has been under a hard fate since the invention of printing. After the Complutenses and Erasmus, who had but very ordinary manuscripts, it became the property of booksellers. . . . No heathen author has had such ill fortune. Terence, Ovid, etc., for the first century after printing, went about with twenty thousand errors in them. But when learned men undertook them, and from the oldest manuscripts set out correct editions, those errors fell and vanished. But if they had kept to the first published text, and set the various lections only in the margin, those classic authors would be as clogged with variations as Doctor Mill's Testament is.

⁵ Vincent, "History of Textual Criticism," p. 72.

But though Bentley made elaborate proposals for the printing of a critical text of the Greek Testament, he only left materials for the solution of the problem he had raised. In spite of this seeming failure, however, his work was of great importance.

For he gave the impulse needed to extend the field of textual criticism out over the Continent. Here we find John A. Bengel, of Würtemberg, publishing the text of a Greek Testament in 1734, in the main like the Received Text, though accompanied by his own preferred readings in the margin. Bengel, however, is noted for having been the first to attempt anything like a real classification of his authorities, a principle which was to become very fruitful in the hands of later critics. He was criticised sharply by J. J. Wetstein, of Basle, who, though he equipped his New Testament of 1751-52 with a number of various readings and a fine series of illustrative passages from sacred and profane literature, was so partial to the textual witnesses upon which the Received Text was based as to reject the evidence of the earlier and better manuscripts. A more illustrious Continental critic was J. J. Griesbach, a native of Hesse Darmstadt, who published three editions of the New Testament between 1774 and 1806. Griesbach's contribution to textual science as applied to the Scriptures lay in his extension of the principle of classification of the authorities for the text from a twofold division, Eastern and Western, into a threefold: Alexandrian, found in Origen and some early versions; Eastern, in vogue at Constantinople and Antioch; and Western, found in the Latin versions and Fathers. This theory, in addition to classifying the authorities and seeking to use them critically, attempted to vindicate the older manuscripts against the claims of the

later authorities, and so anticipated the most widely accepted hypothesis of textual criticism today.

In 1831 a new era in Biblical textual criticism began with the appearance of a New Testament by Karl Lachmann. This scholar's method was to reject the mass of later authorities and confine attention to a small group of ancient manuscripts, versions, and Fathers. The best-known name, however, in this field during the first part of the nineteenth century was that of Constantine Tischendorf. The romantic story of his discovery of the Sinaitic manuscript has been told. But he was just as much interested in the use of the greatly enlarged mass of textual materials as in the discovery of more. He published eight editions of the Greek New Testament, the last one following the finding of Sinaiticus and embodying the valuable readings of this fine old Bible. His chief service consisted in adding to the known variant readings a goodly number from the chief ancient manuscripts and so making possible the thorough-going study of variations that came in the epoch-making text of two Englishmen, Westcott and Hort. These coworkers did not edit new manuscripts and gather new materials but rather confined themselves to the elaboration and application of the principles upon which the text of the New Testament should be constructed. They emphasized a thorough knowledge of the documents as necessary before final judgment on divergent readings could be taken. They sought a more complete grouping of the authorities for the text into families, and distinguished the groups of textual witnesses which have since been almost universally accepted by scholars. The Westcott and Hort Greek Testament appeared in 1881, a few months after the Revised Version was published. It became the accepted authority

for England and this country and has guided the course of textual criticism from that day to this. Some modifications of the Westcott and Hort theory have been made since it was first proposed, but it still holds the field among present-day textual scholars and "is presupposed as the starting-point of nearly all the work that is being done in this department of New Testament Criticism."⁶

Thus we see that classification of the known textual witnesses into groups, or types of text, has become a controlling principle, and it has given us the three or four types of text that are widely recognized today. In very early times variations crept into the New Testament text, since scribes felt free to alter manuscripts they were copying. This practise produced a type of text marked by wide departures from what is now regarded as the true text. These are for the most part additions to the common text, though in a few striking instances they consist in omissions. For instance, in Acts 10 : 25 f. the Revised Version gives :

And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up: I myself also am a man.

But in this early popular text we read :

But as Peter came nigh unto Cæsarea, one of the servants ran forward and announced that he had come. And Cornelius rushed out and met him, and falling at his feet worshiped. But Peter said unto him, What are you doing? Worship God; for I am a man as you also are.

Another interesting passage from this early personal text shows essentially the same characteristic. After Luke

⁶ Kenyon, "Textual Criticism of the New Testament," p. 308.

6 : 4 it adds the incident of the man working in a field on a Sabbath day, to whom Jesus said: "O man, if you realize what you are doing, you are blessed; but if you do not know it, you are cursed and a transgressor of the law." Once more, in Luke 22 : 19f., a marginal note calls attention to the fact that "some ancient authorities omit 'which is given for you . . . which is poured out for you.'" This is one of the omissions of this type of New Testament text, which thus makes it appear that at the institution of the Supper the cup preceded the loaf. It looks therefore, as if this, the so-called "Western" text, might have been a private and personal type of text rather than official and ecclesiastical, and hence much more freely handled by Christians in the second and third centuries all over the Roman Empire.

Another type of text is that which is largely reflected in the Revisers' Greek text, from which the translation of the Revised Version in English was made. This type is called the Neutral, or scholarly text, of the early church, and is generally regarded as being a close approximation to the original text of the New Testament. The characteristics of this are most marked in contrast with the prominent features of the next type of text now to be considered.

This third type of text is that which lies back of the Authorized Version known as the Received Text. In general, the readings of this so-called Syrian text are marked by a tendency to combine divergent readings and smooth out difficulties. In Mark 9 : 49 one group of authorities reads as in the Revised Version, "For every one shall be salted with fire." The Western, or popular text, just described, has, "For every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." But the type of text we are now describing,

the Syrian, or authoritative text, combines these two readings into one and has, as a marginal note informs us, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." And this is just what is given in the Authorized Version, as we should expect. Another illustration will but confirm the impression already made of the character of this Syrian text. In Luke 24 : 53 the verse closes, in the Revised Version, with the words, "blessing God." The Western text reads, "praising God." The Syrian text again combines these into, "praising and blessing God." Again this is what is given in the Authorized Version. So, similarly, taking longer sections into account, the Syrian text, and consequently the Authorized Version, includes such passages as Mark 16 : 9-20, written in the second century by an Asia Minor presbyter named Aristion, as an old Armenian manuscript shows, John 7 : 53 to 8 : 11, the story of the adulteress, and First John 5 : 7f., the three heavenly witnesses, which was never rightly a part of the New Testament. Further study of the differences between the Syrian and Neutral types of text will make clear the reasons for the omissions of the Revised Version as compared with the Authorized Version. The Revised Version agrees most nearly with the Neutral, or scholarly type of text, used by the leaders of the church and preserved to us by the oldest and best manuscripts of the Bible.

Thus the work of establishing the text of the New Testament has progressed. For the Old Testament much more remains to be done than for the New Testament. It is sometimes said that textual critics only endanger the text of Scripture and unsettle men's faith in it. But we ought to be thankful for the work of these makers of the Bible, since by their long-continued and devoted study,

often at great personal sacrifice, they have secured for us a better text of the Bible than men have hitherto possessed. They have shown that the far greater portion of our modern critical New Testament text is established beyond doubt and that the variations, so disturbing at first thought, hardly form more than a mere fragment of the entire text. Gregory figures this to be about half a page of printed matter about the size of the hand, and continues suggestively: ⁷

And the great point for a Christian is that he must wish to have his one great book brought into the very best condition possible. It would be strange if a Christian should take pains to have a well-built church, and wish to have a well-prepared pastor, and be anxious that a good choir be at command, but should say: "It is no matter about the New Testament. The edition that Estienne printed three centuries and a half ago, when but little was known about the text, is quite good enough for me." It is singular to see a man anxious to have the latest and best thing in electric lights, but totally indifferent as to having the best text in his New Testament.

⁷ "Canon and Text of the New Testament," p. 528.

X

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

Study Outline

1. State briefly your conception of what the Bible is. What does Paul mean in 2 Timothy 3 : 16?

2. Compare 1 John 1 : 8 with 3 : 9, Matthew 17 : 5 with Luke 9 : 35, and find in your Bible similar verbal inconsistencies and difficulties.

3. Look up the marginal notes on 1 Samuel 19 : 9 and James 4' : 5, and find in the margin of your Bible other similar variant translations. Consider the meaning of such variations for your conception of the Bible.

4. Study the marginal note on 2 Kings 8 : 10. Find other marginal notes showing variant readings in the authorities upon which our Revised Version rests and state how such variant readings affect your idea of the Bible.

5. Compare Mark 10 : 19 and Romans 3 : 10-18 with the Old Testament passages they reflect. Find other similar New Testament quotations of Old Testament material, and tell whether the New Testament writers and characters took the Old Testament literally or not.

6. Read in the Appendix to this book the excerpts from the Preface of the King James translators, and state their position on the question of literalism.

Scripture References and Helps

2 Timothy 3 : 16.

1 John 1 : 8; 3 : 9; 2 Kings 1 : 17; 3 : 1; Ecclesiastes 1 : 15; Luke 3 : 5.

Amos 8 : 1; Ezekiel 3 : 1-3.

John 6 : 53; Matthew 17 : 5; Mark 9 : 7; Luke 9 : 35.

1 Samuel 19 : 9; Malachi 2 : 15; Matthew 25 : 41;
John 1 : 9; James 4 : 5.

2 Kings 8 : 10; John 7 : 8-10; Matthew 16 : 2f.

Zechariah 1 : 4; 7 : 7, 12; Daniel 9 : 2, 24-27; Mark
10 : 9; Matthew 5 to 7; 2 Corinthians 3 : 6; Romans
3 : 10-18; Psalm 14; 2 Corinthians 6 : 16f.

2 Corinthians 4 : 7.

Encyc. Brit. (11th ed.), art. "Inspiration," vol. XIV,
pp. 645-648.

Hastings' Dict. of Bible, (1 vol. ed.), art. "Bible," §3,
p. 96.

Dods, "The Bible, Origin and Nature," pp. 101-163.

Peake, "The Bible, Its Origin, Significance, and
Worth," pp. 1-41.

Conley, "Bible in Modern Light," pp. 13-45.

Gardiner, "Bible as English Literature," pp. 1-33.

What, now, is the Bible? Is it a single book, meaning just what it says; or a collection of books, saying what it means to us? Is it to be taken literally, as equal in all its parts; or is it to be interpreted, diverse in content and value? These two views of the Bible are sometimes contrasted as those of the historic and of the modern faith, as if these were exclusive of and hostile to each other. The first conception, while not altogether forgetting the library-character of the Bible and the necessity of interpreting it, has nevertheless in the working theory of the vast majority of its advocates made the volume a unit, equally valuable in all its parts and therefore to be taken literally. The second conception presents the Bible as men's record of their experiences of God put down under

the inspiration of the divine Spirit for the good of those who might read. Those who hold the first view are for the most part concerned with the task of making the Bible agree with itself. The proponents of the second view seek to know the Biblical teaching historically and to apply it to life so as to produce the fruits of righteousness in conduct, both individual and social. The first view is formal, the second is vital. We modern Christians do well to think through the problem of our Bible, since our attitude toward the Scriptures will largely influence our religious life.

What, then, is the Bible? It has been defined as "the Book of God and the god of books."¹ Many people call it briefly "the Word of God" and speak of it as if it had been dictated by the Almighty, and regard it, not as having grown into its present form, but as having been produced at a single stroke at one time. Others recognize its diversity in time and authorship and yet find no problem connected with its history, its literary development, its place and authority in life. They make the Bible one in teaching and value, infallible in all its statements, and equally authoritative in all its parts. "The Bible from Cover to Cover" has become a slogan with many, who quote Paul as referring to the Bible in its present form (2 Tim. 3 : 16), and when asked to explain do so by a ready-made theory rather than in the light of the facts of the origin and history of the book and the events which led to the collection of those Scriptures we find embodied in our Old and New Testaments.

These defenders of the Bible feel that they honor it by holding to the theory of its verbal inspiration, and they declare themselves literalists who take the Word precisely

¹ McPherson, "Modern Conflict Over the Bible," p. 39f.

as it reads. But they who profess the doctrine do not consistently apply it to Scripture. Does the Bible mean what it says? Verbal contradictions and inconsistencies appear here and there. For instance, we read, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1 : 8). Again, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin . . . and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (1 John 3 : 9). Once more, we find an apparent contradiction in words in the records of the kings of Israel and Judah. For in one place the text reads, "And Jehoram began to reign in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah." But later we are told of this same king, "Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah" (2 Kings 1 : 17; 3 : 1). A third illustration leaves the Old Testament and the New in flat contradiction, if we must take the words of the Bible just as they read. For in Ecclesiastes the Preacher in his pessimism declares, "That which is crooked cannot be made straight" (Eccles. 1 : 15), while a preacher of the new dispensation, quoting from an optimist of the old, hopefully insists, "And the crooked shall become straight" (Luke 3 : 5).

Another class of statements in the Bible which are not taken as they read is made up of such expressions as are often found in the prophets. That stern poet of doom in the Old Testament says:

"Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me;

And, behold, a basket of summer fruit" (Amos 8 : 1).

But no one supposes that God in visible bodily form was actually pointing out fruit to the prophet; only that the

latter saw such a basket, was impressed by it as a means of picturing a truth he had for the people, and used it as a symbol to convey the lesson he felt moved to teach. Or again, when that prophet-pastor on the banks of the Chebar tells of his eating a roll (Ezek. 3 : 1-3), we see in his description a symbolic action, which is to be interpreted as figurative.

And if reply is made that these illustrations are found in prophetic discourse, we need only remind ourselves of the words of the Master, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves" (John 6 : 53). The most ardent literalist would not insist that Jesus in these words requires men to become cannibals in order to have life. Yet that is to take the Bible as it reads. So, also, the words spoken to Jesus in the transfiguration suggest a warning against pressing the doctrine of verbal inspiration. In Matthew's version of the voice out of the cloud the wording is, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17 : 5). Mark and Luke omit the last clause (Mark 9 : 7 and Luke 9 : 35), while Luke reads, "My Son, my chosen." Broadus, in his comment on Matthew's statement of the voice, disposes of literalism by saying:² "Of course the words cannot have been spoken in all these forms; an unquestionable proof, if it were needed, that the Evangelists do not always undertake to give the exact words."

If, now, further evidence is needed of the impossibility of the doctrine of literalism, it may be found in variant translations of passages appearing in the margins of an average reference Bible. In 1 Samuel 19 : 9 the text reads, "And an evil spirit from Jehovah was upon Saul."

² "American Commentary on Matthew," p. 372.

But a marginal variant rendering of this verse gives, "The spirit of Jehovah was evil toward Saul." This marginal translation is far from being identical with that of the text, yet the words of the Hebrew will bear this rendering. Malachi 2 : 15 offers a far more difficult verse, in fact one well-nigh hopelessly obscure. In the body of the passage we read: "And did he not make one, although he had the residue of the Spirit? And wherefore one? He sought a godly seed." The marginal version of the verse runs: "And not one hath done so who had a residue of the spirit. Or what? is there one that seeketh a godly seed?" These translations of the Hebrew are certainly different, yet we are told by Hebrew scholars that the rendering in the text is a possible translation, though that of the margin is better.³ And the same phenomena are found in the New Testament. "Depart from me, ye cursed," or "Depart from me under a curse" says Jesus in Matthew 25 : 41. In John 1 : 9 the statement is, "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." But the margin makes the true light light "every man as he cometh" into the world. And again, in James 4 : 5 there is a passage to which two variant translations are attached. Which of these three does this verse mean? (1) "Doth the spirit which he made to dwell in us long unto envying?" (2) "The Spirit which he made to dwell in us he yearneth for even unto jealous envy." (3) "That Spirit which he made to dwell in us yearneth for us even unto jealous envy."

But some feel that this appeal to marginal variant renderings is not well taken. They declare that we must go back of all translations to the original.

³ J. M. P. Smith, "International Critical Commentary on Malachi," p. 54.

There are convincing reasons for believing that the original manuscripts of the Bible contained no error. We cannot conceive of error if God inspired the writers to give these truths to men.⁴

The term original manuscripts is not wholly free from ambiguity in the above quotation. If by it is meant the actual autographs as they left the hands of the Biblical writers, then nothing can be affirmed of them with assurance, since so far as known today none of the autographs of Biblical writings are in existence. And if by the term is meant simply the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible, then, as copies, they do contain variant readings that make it impossible to hold a strict doctrine of verbal inspiration. Consider 2 Kings 8 : 10. As it reads in the text it makes the man of God a liar. For Elisha sent word to the Syrian king by Hazael: "Go say unto him, Thou shalt surely recover; howbeit Jehovah hath showed me that he shall surely die." A marginal variant reading relieves the passage of its verbal contradiction and moral difficulty; moreover, it makes the account consistent: "Thou shalt not recover; for Jehovah hath showed me that he shall surely die." A similar variation in reading occurs in the New Testament in John 7 : 8: "Go ye up unto the feast; I go not up unto this feast; because my time is not yet fulfilled." And then when his brethren had gone up Jesus went up secretly. (John 7 : 10.) These two verses taken literally, cause real difficulty to most readers and were the occasion of questionings very early in the history of the church. For "many ancient authorities add 'yet'" immediately after "I go not up" in verse 8, if we may trust a marginal note at this point. Finally, to take another instance from the New Testament, the text of the passage in Matthew

⁴ McPherson, "Modern Conflict," p. 8f.

16 : 2f. contains words which to the end of verse 3, we are told by a marginal note again, "are omitted by some of the most ancient and other important authorities." Jesus' answer to the Pharisees and Sadducees is found in verse 4, as was noticed by Origen in the third century A. D. in his commentary on Matthew, while the last part of verse 2, with all of verse 3, probably formed no part of the original text. Indeed, in spite of the retention of these portions by the Revised Version, Broadus felt that they were certainly not a part of the first Gospel in its original form.⁵

Such passages are numerous in the Bible and suggest the fundamental difficulty inherent in the doctrine of literalism, whether it be based on the versions merely or the manuscripts themselves. And this evidence finds support in the Bible's incidental reflection of the attitude of Biblical writers and persons on this unscriptural way of treating the Scriptures. The prophet Zechariah appeals to the authority of those spokesmen of God who lived and preached before the Exile (Zech. 1 : 4; 7 : 7, 12), but he is more concerned with the spirit of their utterances than with the phraseology. He gives the refrain of the earlier prophets and a summary of their teaching, but it is adapted to the conditions of his own age; it is not couched in the words and phrases of the older prophets.⁶ In similar fashion the writer of Daniel is trying to understand Jeremiah's ancient prophecy of Jerusalem's seventy-year desolation, but he interprets the older seer's message and transforms it into the famous Seventy Weeks oracle. (Dan. 9 : 2, 24-27.) Jesus, too, was no literalist in his treatment of Scripture. We are told that "the Old Tes-

⁵ Broadus, "American Commentary on Matthew," p. 348.

⁶ G. A. Smith, "Book of the Twelve," Vol II, p. 26of., note 3.

tament, as we have it today, was the text-book of Jesus, and that in the temptations of life he did not have recourse to his own supernatural resources," but "won his first great victory by simply declaring in a childlike trust: 'It is written.'"⁷ If this be true, we should expect the Master to reproduce the words of the Old Testament in the form we know them, when he quotes portions of Scripture. But this is not the case. Reciting the commandments, in answer to the young man he loved, he inserts one not in the lists as they now appear in the Old Testament. Five of the six he gives are from the ancient law, but "Do not defraud" (Mark 10 : 19) is not there. And in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 to 7) the oft-repeated formula introducing a new topic suggests how Jesus was contrasting his own teaching with that of both Moses and other teachers in their interpretations.⁸ Moreover, his quotation of the Wisdom of God (by some believed to be a non-canonical source now lost) against the "lawyers" suggests his readiness to go outside the letter of the Old Testament as we now have it. (Luke 11 : 49.) Does not this show that Jesus was concerned with the spirit and purpose of the Old Testament rather than with just its letter? And not only so, he actually points out the transitory character of the Jewish Scriptures, and suggests that they were superseded by the gospel of the kingdom. "The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached" (Luke 16 : 16). This vital conception of Scripture comes to its classic expression in the great apostle to the Gentiles, "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3 : 6). And Paul applies this

⁷ McPherson, "Modern Conflict," p. 12.

⁸ Cf. Broadus, "American Commentary on Matthew," p. 102.

principle in his own practise. Quoting in Romans 3 : 10-18 somewhat at length he first abridges a part of Psalm 14, then adds to that abridgment a number of verses (13-18) as if they had originally formed a continuous passage in the Old Testament. But these verses are taken from different parts of the Jewish Scriptures, not always exactly quoted and strung together to form a single passage. Again, he introduces a quotation with the expression "As said God," yet the quotation is a paraphrase of a number of Old Testament passages, more nearly like the Greek of the Septuagint than the Hebrew, and the first words of the quotation, "I will dwell in them," are not in any of the passages represented in the paraphrase. (Cf. 2 Cor. 6 : 16f.) Surely Paul wanted the spirit of the Old Testament teaching, not its letter. Moreover, Paul quotes from rabbinic tradition as of equal authority with the Old Testament, in Galatians 3 : 19, when he says that the law "was ordained by the hand of a mediator."⁹

In general this is the attitude of the church toward Scripture down through the early and Middle Ages of its history. The same is true of the modern period till the time of the King James Bible in 1611. The translators of this splendid version recognized the presence of obscurities in the Biblical text and were liberal-minded enough to put marginal notes in their translation explaining and clearing up many doubtful points. Never for a moment did they hold the doctrine of literalism, claiming the verbal inspiration of the Bible.

It hath pleased God [they say in their noble preface] in his divine prouidence, heere and there to scatter wordes and sentences of that difficultie and doubtfulnessse, not in doctrinall points that

⁹ Cf. Robinson, "Life of Paul," p. 34f.

concerne saluation, . . but in matters of less moment, that fearefulnessesse would better beseeme vs than confidence.¹⁰

In fact, one of the prominent features of this so-called Authorized Version is its variety of expression, and this is due to the translators' repudiation of literalism and their refusal to be bound by the letter. They claimed the right to render a Hebrew or Greek word once by "intent" and another time by "purpose"; an original word by "journeying" and again by "traveling"; or, once by "pain" and again by "ache"; and so on through a long list. In fact, "to minse the matter," as they so quaintly phrase it, they thought literalism¹¹

to sauor more of curiositie then wisdome, and that rather it would breed scorne in the Atheist, then bring profite to the godly Reader. For is the kingdome of God become words or syllables? why should wee be in bondage to them if we may be free, vse one precisely when wee may vse another no lesse fit, as commodiously?

¹⁰ Cambridge English Classics, Reprint of the Authorized Version of the English Bible, 1611, *The Translators to the Reader*, p. 28.

¹¹ *Translators to Reader*, p. 28.

XI

THE UNDERLYING CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

Study Outline: Questions for Reflection

1. What evidences of the Bible's power can you suggest?
2. What effect on individual lives has the Bible produced?
3. What influence on human society has the Bible had?
4. To what element in the Bible is this influence due?
5. Wherein does the authority of the Bible lie, in its statements or in its principles?
6. What to you is the real purpose of the Bible?
7. What should be our purpose in studying the Bible?

References and Helps

Psalm 25 : 4; 119 : 9, 105; Luke 15 : 11-32; John 14 : 6; Romans 8 : 38, 39; 2 Timothy 3 : 17; Hebrews 1 : 1, 2.

Hastings' Dict. Bib., 1 vol, ed., art. "Bible," p. 95, §1.

Hughes, "The Bible and Life," pp. 21-48 and 213-239.

Clarke, "Sixty Years With the Bible," pp. 244-259.

Dods, "The Bible, Its Origin and Nature," pp. 101-163.

Von Dobschuetz, "The Influence of the Bible on Civilization," pp. 164-190.

Conley, "The Bible in Modern Light," pp. 25-39.

Thus far we have been concerned necessarily with the

human side of our Bible, reflected so clearly by the writer of Hebrews. (Heb. 1 : 1, 2.) Such a subject has its place, since no study of the records which preserve the Scriptures for us is without value. But the author would be untrue to his conviction about the essential nature of the Book, were he to stop here without at least a glance at its divine character.

The fact of the Bible's power over men is beyond dispute. It is a small volume, yet has been the inspiration of almost countless books, sermons, and tracts. It is an ancient volume, yet is still enthroned in the heart of our modern life. Oriental in origin and atmosphere for the most part, it has followed the course of empire and won its greatest triumphs in the Occident. Produced centuries ago in a small and remote country, it has defied geographical distance and temporal limitation. Shaped and colored by the land of its birth, it is none the less adapted to all sorts and conditions of human life. While the sacred books of other religions remain bound by the limited habitat of their origin, the Bible has transcended all the limits of land and clime in the reach of its influence. While other scriptures refuse to thrive on translation, the Christian Scriptures flourish afresh in new forms. "From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand, the Bible seems as it were indigenous to all zones, climates, and conditions."¹

Moreover, all down through its history this book of divine religion has produced a religious effect in the lives of its individual readers. For nineteen centuries it has been the interpreter and guide of men, teaching the truth of such fundamental realities as these: the verity of the being of God, the constitution and destiny of man, and

¹ Baldwin, "Modern Miracles," p. 240.

the nature of the relation existing between the human and divine. It has taught the world that religion is God at work in man seeking to lift him to share in the divine life. It has taught that religion is more than worship alone, though this represents inward devotion; more than conduct alone, although conduct is a most important element; more than creed alone, though creed is almost a necessary expression of it. The Bible has been and is today a moral pathfinder, answering the deepest cry of the human heart,

"Show me thy ways, O Jehovah;
Teach me thy paths" (Ps. 25 : 4).

But more significant than this, the Bible has exercised a molding influence on human civilization. To note in passing only one illustration, the Anglo-Saxon-speaking people owe much of their progress to the silent power of the Book. On the occasion of the three-hundredth anniversary of the King James Version Whitelaw Reid, then our ambassador to Great Britain, is reported by the newspapers to have given expression to this eloquent tribute to the Bible: "For the past three centuries the Bible has been the mainspring of Anglo-Saxon development, having molded its morals, lifted its legislation and its jurisprudence, and inspired its literature." And von Dobschuetz, in his Harvard Lectures in 1914, feels that the influence of the Bible on civilization will grow greater in the future, the more the Bible is used as an influence in inward inspiration to piety of life :²

Making men devout, it makes them strong and influential in the common effort to promote civilization by removing everything

² "The Influence of the Bible on Civilization," p. 190.

which is contrary to the welfare of others. That is the most important influence which the Bible can have; and that influence it still exerts and ever will exert on civilization.

If, now, we seek a reason for this judgment concerning the power and influence of the Christian Scriptures, may it not be found in our conception of the fundamental nature of the Bible? Essentially, it is a book of inner spiritual truth, and such truth is not attested to us by external demonstration. This truth is self-authenticating by its own inherent worth. As we read the Bible we select that which meets the requirements of our personal life. In infinite wisdom God has made it so, and we but follow his direction when we appropriate from the mass of truth in the Scriptures that which satisfies our own individual needs. Having the Spirit of Christ within us, we use this possession as a means of getting from the Bible that truth which will transform the life into the pattern of the divine.

This is because the Bible is not dependent upon what Bishop Hughes calls formal truthfulness for its power of appeal. It has its forms of expression, as before suggested, but the reality of its inspiration does not depend upon these forms. As Hughes suggests, we may read a perfectly correct description of a street scene, which pictures to our mind all the details of the various groups in the street on a particular occasion, without feeling that the description is inspired or inspiring. On the contrary, men respond to the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15 : 11-32), for instance, as both inspired and inspiring. For

the son and the father are ever with us. God and his children are the everlasting facts. The story is more true than the de-

scription. This contrast represents the biblical trend. The Book penetrates through the husk to the kernel, through superficial facts to deepest truths, through passing events to eternal meanings.³

And this suggests a basis for one's doctrine of the authority of the Bible. It is not to be found in the forms and formulas of the past, good and helpful though these have been. It must be found in the accordance of Biblical truth with that Spirit of Christ in the heart of the believer. God spoke to men in the olden time through the makers of the Bible, and Christ's Spirit is resident in the hearts of men to-day, speaking to them by faith in his person. Bring these two together, the outer and inner, the objective and subjective, and we have a basis for authority in things spiritual that is permanent and satisfying. It is embodied for us in the Christ of the Gospels, whose person gives us the divine standard: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14 : 6). The authority of the Bible for our religious life is the authority of Jesus the Christ as he makes himself known to the individual soul. He is in us the touchstone of authority by which we are to test all religious teaching, whether ancient or modern.

What shall we say, now, of the purpose of the Book? Fundamentally, what is the Bible? In respect of its purpose it is a means of spiritual nourishment and quickening. It was written and gathered into its present form, not primarily to give us information about this material universe, but for the purpose of helping man to know God and become Godlike in spirit. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" is the sort of questions it asks, answering them from the heights of inspiration, "by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Ps.

³ "The Bible and Life," pp. 25, 26.

119 : 9). Whatever we need to know about God is revealed to us in the Bible, and whatever power we need to strengthen us in the struggle against evil and lift us to an indomitable faith in the Son of God as a personal Saviour comes to us in its pages. And this divine purpose of the Bible is intimately associated with its inspiration, giving to it its supreme dynamic. In this it differs from other sacred writings. It is not necessary to deny helpfulness to the sacred books of other religions in order to enhance Christianity's Bible. The literature of Brahmanism has led men to thoughtful contemplation; the teachings of Confucius have served men as a basis for a good code of morals; and the Koran has proved itself to many an inspiration to prayer and devotion. But the distinction and glory of the Christian Bible is this, that having all these qualities it also begets in human beings a desire for a Godlike character, and lends to them in their struggle after this supreme good the power of association, through faith, with One who is not ashamed to call men brothers. And the Bible not only brings to us in our own personal struggle upward the power of the Saviour's personality, beholding whom in its pages we are surely, if slowly, transformed into the divine likeness by what Drummond somewhere so felicitously calls the "alchemy of influence," but it also prepares us by the same transforming power for efficient service among our fellow men by furnishing us "unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3 : 17).

As a corollary from the above it follows that we must approach the Bible in the right attitude of mind and with the right purpose. To come to it with any other purpose than to ascertain our duty before God and man is to turn the Book from its true intent. Of course, since we do

not yet fully know its truth, scholarship must continue its task of investigating what may seem at times the superficial and incidental in Bible study, in order to recover for us the volume in its fulness. And we must not censure the honest critic by calling harsh names, for the devout scholar does not stop with this critical approach to the Bible. It is not for him an end in itself, only a means to the end. He goes on to search the Bible for knowledge of the will of God for men today. Approaching the Scriptures in this mood, with a spiritual passion and genuine willingness to do the divine will as revealed in the Book, he finds clear light on life's way and power for the doing of duty revealed. So it is with all who come to the Bible in this spirit and with this purpose. For the Book as a divine revelation of vital truth culminates in a Life that gives us our best vision of life, in a Teacher whose words give us the best philosophy of life, in a Friend whose Spirit is our best dynamic of life, in a Saviour whose victory over sin and death assures us of our ultimate triumph in life.

And this brings us to the crowning glory of our Bible, its capacity for translation into the language of each individual heart. We claim the right to interpret the Scriptures for ourselves. This means that our Scripture, authoritative for our life, is not the Bible as others read it, but as read through the medium of our own personality. Respect for the interpretations of others is, of course, essential to the ascertainment of the truth of Scripture, since these interpretations constitute one means by which the Almighty brings instruction in Biblical truth to us. But he who is dependent for his Scripture upon what he hears of the Bible from others is in danger of lacking depth and stability in his spiritual life. And this is no

plea for mere eccentricity in one's use and interpretation of the Bible. It is rather a suggestion that each bring his own mind and heart under the tutelage of the Spirit of God to be filled with the truth according to individual capacity.

For this is just the ministry of the Spirit of truth, to take of the wonderful things of the Book and make them ours. And when we in this fashion have each our own Bible, the revelation of the divine will in human records of the past interpreted by the revelation of the Christ in our own heart and conscience, we may, adapting Paul's words to this statement, feel sure that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature" (Rom. 8 : 38, 39) will be able to rob us of our pathfinder, guide, and stay along the way from earth to heaven. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Ps. 119 : 105).

Lamp of our feet whereby we trace
Our paths when wont to stray,
Stream from the fount of heavenly grace,
Brook by the traveler's way,

.
Word of the ever-living God,
Will of his glorious Son,
Without thee how could earth be trod,
Or heaven itself be won? ⁴

⁴ Bernard Barton, 1827.

APPENDIX

**Excerpts from Writings Which Throw Light Upon
Some Matters Presented in the Preceding Chapters**

THE LETTER OF PSEUDO-ARISTEAS

THE STORY OF THE SEPTUAGINT

This letter purports to be a contemporary record by Aristeas, who represents himself as an officer in the service of the king of Egypt (Ptolemy Philadelphus, B. C. 285-247). Aristeas is interested in the antiquities of the Jews and writes to his brother, Philocrates, an account of a journey to Jerusalem he had recently made in the interest of a Greek version of the Jewish law for the royal library at Alexandria. He was a member of the deputation despatched by the king to the Jews with a letter to the High Priest Eleazar, asking him to send to Alexandria six learned elders from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to do the work of translation.

The seventy-two elders were chosen in due time and sent to Alexandria, carrying with them a copy of their Law written in gold ink on rolls made of skins. The king received the elders at a banquet, where he tested their ability with hard questions. Then after a few days Demetrius, the librarian of the royal library, conducted the elders to a place by the seashore remote from the noise and tumult of the city, and urged them to perform their task of translating their Law into Greek. They did it in the space of seventy-two days, and the translation was enthusiastically received by the Jewish community of Alexandria, approved by the king with delight and reverence, and ordered put away for safe-keeping.

Such in barest outline is the story which has given us the name Septuagint for the Alexandrian version of the

Jewish Scriptures. The following excerpts from the letter will supply more details of the story, which is not now accepted by scholars as authentic. The story cannot be taken as a contemporary record by a non-Palestinian writer. Once he speaks of the way in which "the affairs of state used to be carried out by these Egyptian kings" (§28), and again, after referring to the arrangement for the entertainment of the guests at Philadelphus' court, adds, "it is an arrangement which is still maintained to-day" (§182). There are numerous other indications in the letter of a later date, and the writer is too familiar with Jewish life and customs to have been an Alexandrian Greek official. But the story is interesting and of some value, representing, as it does, the Jews as having heard and welcomed the Greek version of the Law before it was presented to the king. This suggests that the version was made because the Alexandrian Jews needed it for their religious life.

Read the Aristeas story in the following excerpts: ¹

As the story of our deputation to Eleazar, the high priest of the Jews, is worth the telling, and because thou, Philocrates, hast set thy heart, as thou art constantly reminding me, on learning the motives and purpose of our mission, I have endeavoured to give thee a clear account of the matter. . . It was my devotion to the careful study of religion which led me to offer my services for the embassy to the man I have mentioned, who, owing to his virtuous character and exalted position, is held in high honour both by his countrymen and by the rest of the world, and is in possession of documents of the greatest service to his nation, whether at home or abroad, for the translation of the divine law, because it exists in their country written on parchment in Hebrew characters. This embassy then I undertook with enthusiasm, after finding an opportunity of approaching the king on the subject of the men who

¹ Thackerary's Translation, Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, London, 1918.

were removed to Egypt from Judæa by the king's father, when first he took over the city and the government of Egypt. This story also it is worth while my telling thee. . . But, not to weary you with too long an introduction, I will resume the thread of the narrative.

Demetrius of Phalerum, as keeper of the king's library, received large grants of public money with a view to his collecting, if possible, all the books in the world: and by purchases and transcriptions he to the best of his ability carried the king's purpose into execution. Being asked once in my presence, about how many thousands of books were already collected, he replied, "More than two hundred thousand, O king; and I will ere long make diligent search for the remainder, so that a total of half a million may be reached. I am informed that the Jews also have certain laws which are deserving of transcription and a place in thy library." "What is to hinder thee, then," replied the king, "in this task? For all the necessary means are at thy service." And Demetrius answered, "Translation is also required. For in the Jews' land they use a peculiar script (just as Egyptians have their system of letters) and speak a peculiar language. It is commonly thought that they use the Syrian language, but this is an error; it is another dialect." And when the king learnt all the facts, he gave command that a letter should be written to the high priest of the Jews, in order that the proposal above mentioned might be carried into effect. . .

And when this business was ended (the emancipation of Jewish slaves) he ordered Demetrius to submit a statement concerning the transcription of the Jewish books. . . And the following is a copy of the memorial: "To the great king from Demetrius—In obedience to thy order, O king, that the books which are wanting to complete the library should be added to the collection, and that those which are defective should be duly repaired, I have expended great care upon these matters and now submit a reference to thee. The books of the Jewish law with some few others are wanting. They are written in Hebrew letters and in the Hebrew tongue, and have been interpreted somewhat carelessly and do not represent the original text, according to information supplied by the experts, because they have never received a king's fostering care. It is necessary that these books too should in an amended

form find a place in thy library, because this code of laws, in that it is divine, is full of wisdom and faultless. . . If then it be thy good pleasure, O king, a letter shall be written to the high priest at Jerusalem, bidding him send six elders from each tribe, men of the highest repute and versed in their country's law, in order that we may test wherein the more part agree, and so obtaining an accurate translation may deposit it in a conspicuous place in a manner worthy of the undertaking and of thy gracious will. Fare ever well!" When this memorial had been presented, the king ordered that a letter should be written to Eleazar on these matters informing him also of the emancipation of the captives. . .

The tenour of the king's letter was as follows: "King Ptolemæus to Eleazar the high priest greeting and health. Forasmuch as there are many Jews settled in our realm who were forcibly removed from Jerusalem by the Persians at the time of their power, and others who entered Egypt as captives in the train of our father . . . we, then, have given liberty to more than a hundred thousand captives. . . Now since we desire to confer a favour not on these only, but on all Jews throughout the world and on future generations, it is our will that your Law be translated from the Hebrew tongue in use among you into Greek, that so these writings also may find a place in our library with the other royal volumes. . ."

To this letter Eleazar replied appropriately as follows: "Eleazar the High Priest to King Ptolemæus, his sincere friend, greeting. . . On receiving thy letter we greatly rejoiced because of thy purpose and noble resolve, and we collected the whole people and read it to them. . . We shewed them also the vials which thou sentest, . . the five bowls, and the table as dedicatory offerings, and the hundred talents of silver for the offerings of sacrifices and for such repairs as the temple may require. These gifts were brought by Andreas, one of thy honoured courtiers, and Aristetas, . . We therefore straightway offered sacrifices on thy behalf and on behalf of thy sister and thy children and thy friends, and the whole people prayed that thy undertakings might ever prosper, . . And in the presence of them all we selected six elders from each tribe, good men and true, whom we are also sending with a copy of the Law."

I have now given thee, dear brother Philocrates, such a sum-

mary description of these matters as was necessary. The story of the translation we will tell in the sequel. . .

So Eleazar, when he had offered sacrifice and selected the men and made ready many gifts for the king, sent us on our way in great security. And when we reached Alexandria, the king was informed of our arrival. On our admission to the court, Andreas and I gave friendly greetings to the king and delivered the letter from Eleazar. The king was so anxious to meet the delegates that he gave orders to dismiss all the other officials and to summon the men. . . When they entered with the gifts which had been sent and the precious parchments whereon was inscribed the law in gold in the Jewish characters, the material being wonderfully prepared, and the joining of the several leaves being rendered imperceptible, the king when he saw the men, began to ask concerning the books. And when they had taken the rolls out of their coverings and unrolled the leaves, the king, after pausing for a long while and making obeisance some seven times, said, "I thank you, friends, and him that sent you still more, but most of all do I thank God, Whose oracles these are. . ." And when they had expressed their gratitude, he ordered that the best quarters near the citadel should be assigned to them, and the banquet made ready.

(Then after a long description of the seven days' banquet the writer continues his story of the work of translation:)

Now after three days Demetrius took the men with him and passing over the breakwater, seven furlongs in length, to the island crossed the bridge and proceeded to the northern district. There he held a session in a house which had been prepared by the sea-shore, magnificently built in a secluded situation, and bade them carry out their work of translation, since all the necessary appliances had been well provided. And so they proceeded to carry it out, arriving at an agreement on each point by comparing each other's work; the appropriate rendering so agreed on was then transcribed under the direction of Demetrius. The session used to last until the ninth hour, and thereafter they would depart to attend to their bodily comforts, all their wants being plentifully supplied. . . Thus, as we have said already, they assembled every day

in this spot, . . . And so it came about that the translation was accomplished in seventy-two days, as though this coincidence had been intended.

And when the work was ended, Demetrius assembled the Jewish people on the spot where the translation had been made and read it through to the whole assembly in the presence of the translators, who received another great ovation from the people in recognition of the great services which they had rendered. . .

When word of these proceedings was brought to the king, he greatly rejoiced, for it seemed to him that his purpose had been securely attained. The whole work was read through to him, and he was greatly astonished at the spirit of the lawgiver. And he said to Demetrius, "How is it that none of the historians or poets ever thought of mentioning such great achievements? . . ."

The king, when he heard the explanation which Demetrius gave of this matter, as above narrated, made obeisance, and ordered that great care should be taken of the books, and that they should be guarded with proper awe. . .

There, Philocrates, thou hast the whole story which I promised thee. . .

TRANSLATION FROM THE SEPTUAGINT

1. KINGDOMS A, CHAPTER 17 (= 1 SAMUEL 17)

DAVID AND GOLIATH

1. And the Philistines assembled their armies for war, and were assembled at Succoth of Idumea, and they encamped between Succoth and Azeka-Ephermem. 2. And Saul and the men of Israel assembled and encamped in the ravine; they were arrayed for war against the Philistines. 3. And the Philistines stood on the mountain on one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with an amphitheater between them. 4. And there went forth a mighty man from the battle-line of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath: his height was four cubits and a span. 5. And a helmet was upon his head, and he was clad in a chainlike cuirass, and the weight of his cuirass was five thousand shekels of bronze and iron. 6. And bronze greaves were upon his legs, and a bronze shield between his shoulders. 7. And the shaft of his spear was like the beam of weavers, and his spear-head six hundred shekels of iron; and he who carried his weapons went before him. 8. And he rose up and shouted aloud to the battle-line of Israel, and said unto them, Why do ye come forth to array yourselves in war against us? Am not I a Philistine, and ye and Saul Hebrews? Choose out for yourselves a man and let him come down to me; 9. and if he is able to fight against me, and if he smites me, then we will be slaves to you, but if I am able and smite him, ye shall be slaves to us and serve us. 10. And the Philistine said, Behold, I have reproached the battle-line of Israel today: give me a man, and we will both fight together. 11. And Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, and were terrified exceedingly. 12. And David said to Saul, Let not, now, the heart of my lord collapse upon him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. 13. And Saul said to David, Thou wilt not be able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for thou art a young boy, and he is a man, a warrior from his youth. 14. And David

said to Saul, Thy servant was tending flocks for his father in the pasture; and whenever there came a lion or a bear and took a sheep from the herd, 35. then I went forth after him and smote him, and drew it out of his mouth; and if he set upon me, I seized him by his throat and smote and killed him. 36. And a bear thy servant smote, and a lion, and the uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of these; shall I not go and smite him, and take away reproach today from Israel? Because who is this uncircumcised, that he reproaches the battle-line of a living God? 37. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of a lion and the paw of a bear will deliver me from the hand of this uncircumcised Philistine. And Saul said to David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. 38. And Saul put upon David a woolen cloak and a bronze helmet upon his head, 39. and he girded David with his sword over his woolen cloak; and he became weary after he had walked about once or twice. And David said to Saul, I am not able to go in these, because I have not tried them. And they took them off him. 40. And he took his staff in his hand and picked out for himself five perfect stones from the creek bed and put them in his shepherd's scrip, which he had for gathering articles, and his sling in his hand; and he went against the Philistine. 42. And Goliath saw David and despised him, because he was a young boy and ruddy with beauty of eyes. 43. And the Philistine said to David, Am I like a dog, that thou comest against me with a rod and stones? And David said, No, worse than a dog. And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44. And the Philistine said to David, Come hither to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of heaven and the beasts of earth. 45. And David said to the Philistine, Thou comest against me with sword and spear and shield, and I come against thee in the name of the Lord God of the hosts of Israel's battle-line, which thou hast reproached today. 46. And the Lord will shut thee up today in my hand, and I will kill thee and will take away thy head from thee, and will give thy members and the members of the army of the Philistines on this day to the fowls of heaven and the beasts of earth: and all the earth shall know that there is a God in Israel. 47. And all this congregation shall know that it is not with sword and spear that the Lord saves: for war is of the Lord, and the Lord will deliver thee into our hands. 48. And the Philistine

arose and went to meet David. 49. And David put forth his hand into the scrip and took thence a single stone and slung it and smote the Philistine in the forehead, and the stone went through the helmet into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the ground. 51. And David ran and stood over him and took his sword and killed him and took off his head: and the Philistines saw that their mighty man was dead, and they fled. 52. And the men of Israel and Judah arose and raised the war-cry, and pursued after them to the entrance of Gath and to the gate of Askalon: and there fell wounded some of the Philistines on the way of the gates both to Gath and Akron. 53. And the men of Israel returned, turning aside from after the Philistines, and they trod down their armies. 54. And David took the head of the Philistine and bore it into Jerusalem, and his accouterments he placed in his tent.

2. KINGDOMS I, 19 : 1-12 (= 1 KINGS 19 : 1-12)

STORY OF ELIJAH

1. And Ahab told Jezebel his wife all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed the prophets with the sword. 2. And Jezebel sent to Elijah and said, If thou art Elijah and I am Jezebel, these things may the god do to me and more also, (but know) that at this hour tomorrow I will make thy life as the life of one of them. 3. And Elijah feared and arose and went away for his life and came to Beersheba, the land of Judah, and left his servant there. 4. And he proceeded into the desert a day's journey and went and sat down under Rathmen; and he asked for himself that he might die and said, Let it suffice now, take my life from me, Lord, for I am not better than my fathers. 5. And he lay down and fell asleep there under a tree: and behold, some one touched him and said unto him, Arise and eat. 6. And Elijah looked, and behold, at his head a rye loaf and a cruse of water: and he arose and ate and drank and turned and lay down. 7. And the angel of the Lord turned a second time and touched him and said unto him, Arise, eat; for too much for thee is the journey. 8. And he arose and ate and drank; and he proceeded in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Mount

Horeb. 9. And there he went into the cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him and said, Why art thou here, Elijah? 10. And Elijah said, Zealously have I been zealous for the Lord Almighty, because the sons of Israel have forsaken thee; thine altars they have torn down and thy prophets they have killed with the sword, and I am left alone, and they seek my life to take it. 11. And he said, Thou shalt go forth tomorrow and shalt stand before the Lord in the mount; behold, the Lord will pass by. And a great mighty wind was rending mountains and crushing rocks before the Lord, in the wind of the Lord (*required reading*: but not in the wind was the Lord); and after the wind, an earthquake (but) not in the earthquake was the Lord; 12. and after the earthquake, a fire, (but) not in the fire was the Lord; and after the fire, a sound of a gentle breeze.

3. KINGDOMS 4, 1 : 18 TO 2 : 1 (= 2 KINGS 1 : 18
TO 2 : 1)

ACCESSION OF JORAM

18. And the rest of the words of Ochozeios [Ahaziah] which he made, behold are they not written in the book of the accounts of the days for the kings of Israel? And Joram, son of Achaab [Ahab] was king over Israel in Samaria twelve years, in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. And he did evil before the Lord, but not as his brothers and not as his mother; and he put away the pillars of the Baal which his father had made and crushed them; but he was firmly fixed in the sins of the house of Jeroboam who made Israel to sin, and he did not withdraw from them. And with wrath was the Lord vexed against the house of Achaab. (See 2 Kings 3 : 1-3.)

4. PSALM XIII (XIV) R. V. XIV

FOR THE END: A PSALM FOR THE DAVID

1. Said the fool in his heart, There is no God.
They became corrupt and loathsome in their practises,
There is no one doing good, there is not even one.

2. The Lord from heaven peeped down upon the sons of men,
To see if there was an understanding one, or one seeking God.
3. All turned aside, together they became useless.
There is no one doing good, there is not even one.
An open sepulcher is their throat,
With their tongues they became deceitful.
The poison of asps is under their lips,
Whose mouth is filled with cursing and bitterness.
Swift their feet to shed blood,
Destruction and wretchedness are in their ways,
And the way of peace they have not known,
There is not the fear of God before their eyes.
4. Will not all they that work iniquity know,
Those that eat down my people for a meal of bread ?
They did not call upon the Lord.
5. There they were afraid with fear where there was no fear ;
For God is in the righteous generation.
6. The counsel of the poor ye put to shame,
For the Lord is his hope.
7. Who will give from Sion the salvation of Israel?

When the Lord shall turn the captivity of his people,
Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

5. JEREMIAH 8 : 8-13

8. How do ye say, Wise are we, and the law of the Lord is with us? In vain was the false reed to the scribes. 9. The wise were ashamed and dismayed and taken, for the law of the Lord they rejected; what wisdom is there among them? 10. On this account I will give their wives to others and their fields to the heirs, 13. and they shall bring together their products, saith the Lord: there is no grape-cluster on the vines and no figs on the fig-trees, and the leaves are fallen.

6. JEREMIAH 10 : 1-5a, 9, 5b

Hear ye the word of the Lord which he spake with reference to you, house of Israel. These things saith the Lord, According to the ways of the Gentiles learn ye not, and of the signs of the heaven be not afraid, for they fear them because of their appearance. For the customs of the Gentiles are vain: a tree is cut out from the woods, a work of an artisan, and an image, adorned with silver and gold; with hammers and nails they fasten them: they will place them and they will not be moved: there is chased silver, they will not proceed, silver affixed from Tharseis will come, gold of Mophaz, and the hand of goldsmiths, works of artificers all; with hyacinth and purple they clothe them: they will be borne and carried because they will not go. Fear ye not them, for they shall not do evil, and good is not in them.

7. JEREMIAH 29 : 15-23 (Lxx, ch. 36)

15. Because ye have said, The Lord appointed prophets for us in Babylon; 21. Thus said the Lord with reference to Ahab and Zedekiah, Behold, I give them into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will smite them before your eyes. 22. And they shall take up from them a curse in all the colony of Judah in Babylon, saying, May the Lord do to thee as he did to Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon broiled with fire, 23. on account of their lawless conduct in Israel, and committed adultery with the wives of their citizens, and uttered a word in my name which I did not command them, and I am witness, saith the Lord.

SELECTIONS FROM THE VULGATE²

1. GENESIS 1 : 1-8

1. *In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram. 2. Terra autem erat inanis et vacua, et tenebrae erant super faciem abyssi; et Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas.*

3. *Dixitque Deus: Fiat lux. Et facta est lux. 4. Et vidit Deus lucem quod esset bona. Et divisit lucem a tenebris. 5. Appella-*

² This and the following selections from the Vulgate are taken from Fillion's *Biblia Sacra juxta Vulgate*, sixth edition, Paris, Aug. 15, 1905.

vitque lucem Diem, et tenebras Noctem. Factumque est vespere et mane, dies unus.

6. Dixit quoque Deus: Fiat firmamentum in medio aquarum, et dividat aquas ab aquis. 7. Et fecit Deus firmamentum, divisitque aquas quae erant sub firmamento, ab his quae erant super firmamentum. Et factum est ita. 8. Vocavitque Deus firmamentum Caelum. Et factum vespere et mane, dies secundus.

2. JOB 38 : 1-9

1. Respondens autem Dominus Job de turbine, dixit:
2. Quis est iste involvens sententias
sermonibus imperitis?
3. Accinge sicut vir lumbos tuos;
interrogabo te, et responde mihi.
4. Ubi eras quando ponebam fundamenta terrae?
Indica mihi, si habes intelligentiam.
5. Quis posuit mensuras ejus, si nosti?
vel quis tetendit super eam lineam?
6. Super quo bases illius solidatae sunt?
aut quis demisit lapidem angularem ejus,
7. cum me laudarent simul astra matutina,
et jubilarent omnes filii Dei?
8. Quis conclusit ostiis mare,
quando erumpebat quasi de vulva procedens;
9. cum ponerem nubem vestimentum ejus,
et caligine illud quasi pannis infantiae obvolverem?

3. PSALM 24 (VULG. 23)

Psalmus XXIII

Hymnus triumphalis pro translatione arcae in Sion

1. Prima sabbati, Psalmus David.

*Domini est terra, et plenitudo ejus;
orbis terrarum, et universi qui habitant in eo.*

2. Quia ipse super maria fundavit eum,
et super flumina praeparavit eum.

3. *Quis ascendet in montem Domini?
aut quis stabit in loco sancto ejus?*
4. *Innocens manibus et mundo corde,
qui non accepit in vano animam suam,
nec juravit in dolo proximo suo.*
5. *Hic accipiet benedictionem a Domino,
et misericordiam a Deo salutaris suo.*
6. *Haec est generatio quarentium eum,
quaerentium faciem Dei Jacob.*
7. *Attollite portas, principes, vestras,
et elevamini, portae aeternales,
et introibit rex gloriae.*
8. *Quis est iste rex gloriae?
Dominus fortis et potens,
Dominus potens in praelio.*
9. *Attollite portas, principes, vestras,
et elevamini, portae aeternales,
et introibit rex gloriae.*
10. *Quis est iste rex gloriae?
Dominus virtutum ipse est rex gloriae.*

4. ISAIAH 53

1. *Quis credidit auditui nostro? et brachium Domini cui revelatum est?* 2. *Et ascendet sicut virgultum coram eo, et sicut radix de terra sitiendi. Non est species ei, neque decor; et vidimus eum, et non erat aspectus, et desideravimus eum; 3. despectum, et novissimum virorum, virum dolorum, et scientem infirmitatem; et quasi absconditus vultus ejus et despectus, unde nec reputavimus eum.*

4. *Vere languores nostros ipse tulit, et dolores nostros ipse portavit; et nos putavimus eum quasi leprosum, et percussum a Deo, et humiliatum.* 5. *Ipse autem vulneratus est propter iniquitates nostras, attritus est propter scelera nostra; disciplina pacis nostrae super eum, et livore ejus sanati sumus.* 6. *Omnes nos quasi oves erravimus, unusquisque in viam suam declinavit; et posuit Dominus in eo iniquitatem omnium nostrum.*

7. *Oblatus est quia ipse voluit, et non aperuit os suum; sicut ovis ad occisionem ducetur, et quasi agnus coram tondente se obmutescet, et non aperiet os suum.* 8. *De angustia, et de judicio*

sublatus est. Generationem ejus quis enarrabit? quia abscissus est de terra viventium. Propter scelus populi mei percussi eum. 9. Et dabit impios pro sepultura, et divitem pro morte sua, eo quod iniquitatem non fecerit, neque dolus fuerit in ore ejus.

10. Et Dominus voluit conterere eum in infirmitate. Si posuerit pro peccato animam suam, videbit semen longævum, et voluntas Domini in manu ejus dirigetur. 11. Pro eo quod laboravit anima ejus, videbit et saturabitur. In scientia sua justificabit ipse justus servus meus multos, et iniquitates eorum ipse portabit. 12. Ideo disperdiam ei plurimos, et fortium dividet spolia, pro eo quod tradidit in mortem animam suam, et cum sceleratis reputatus est, et ipse peccata multorum tulit, et pro transgressoribus rogavit.

5. LUKE 2 : 8-14

8. Et pastores erant in regione eadem vigilantes, et custodientes vigilias noctis super gregem suum. 9. Et ecce angelus Domini stetit juxta illos, et claritas Dei circumfulsit illos, et timuerunt timore magno. 10. Et dixit illis angelus: Nolite timere; ecce enim evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum, quod erit omni populo: 11. quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator, qui est Christus Dominus, in civitate David. 12. Et hoc vobis signum: invenietis infantem panis involtum, et positum in praesepio. 13. Et subito facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae caelestis, laudantium Deum, et dicentium:

14. Gloria in altissimis Deo,
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

6. REVELATION 4 : 8-11

8. Et quatuor animalia, singula eorum habebant alas senas et in circuitu et intus plena sunt oculis; et requiem non habebant die ac nocte, dicentia: Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus omnipotens, qui erat, et qui est, et qui venturus est. 9. Et cum darent illa animalia gloriam, et honorem, et benedictionem sedenti super thronum, viventi in saecula saeculorum, 10. procidebant viginti quatuor seniores ante sedentem in throno, et adorabant viventem in saecula saeculorum, et mittebant coronas suas ante thronum, dicentes: 11. Dignus es, Domine Deus noster, accipere gloriam et honorem, et virtutem, quia tu creasti omnia, et propter voluntatem tuam erant et creata sunt.

7. REVELATION 11 : 15-19

15. *Et septimus angelus tuba cecinit; et factae sunt voces magnae in caelo, dicentes: Factum est regnum hujus mundi, Domini nostri et Christi ejus, et regnabit in saecula saeculorum. Amen.* 16. *Et viginti quatuor seniores, qui in conspectu Dei sedent in sedibus suis, ceciderunt in facies suas, et adoraverunt Deum, dicentes:* 17. *Gratias agimus tibi, Domine Deus omnipotens, qui es, et qui eras, et qui venturus es, quia accepisti virtutem tuam magnam, et regnasti.* 18. *Et iratae sunt gentes, et advenit ira tua, et tempus mortuorum judicari, et reddere mercedem servis tuis prophetis, et sanctis, et timentibus nomen tuum, pusillis et magnis, et exterminandi eos qui corruperunt terram.* 19. *Et apertum est templum Dei in caelo; et visa est arca testamenti ejus in templo ejus, et facta sunt fulgura, et voces, et terrae motus, et grando magna.*

SELECTIONS FROM THE PREFACE OF THE KING JAMES VERSION³

But it is high time to leaue them (the imputations of adversaries), and to shew in brieffe what wee proposed to our selues, and what course we held in this our perusall and suruay of the Bible. Truly (good Christian Reader) wee neuer thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not iustly to be excepted against; that hath bene our indeauour, that our marke. To that purpose there were many chosen, that were greater in other mens eyes then in their owne, and that sought the truth rather then their own praise. . . And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their owne knowledge, or of their sharpenesse of wit, or deepenesse of iudgment, as it were in an arme of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in him that hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting; they prayed to the Lord the Father of our Lord, to the effect that S. Augustine did; O let thy Scripture be my pure delight, let me not be deceiued in them, neither let me deceiue by them. In this confidence, and with this deuotion did they assemble together; not too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest many things haply might escape them. If you aske what they had before them, truely it was the Hebrew text of the Olde Testament, the Greeke of the New. . . These tounge therefore, the Scriptures wee say in those tongues, wee set before vs to translate, being the tongues wherein God was pleased to speake to his Church by his Prophets and Apostles. Neither did we run ouer the worke with that posting haste that the Septuagint did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finished

Purpose and spirit of the translators of the King James Version.

Their task and the care with which they performed it.

³ Taken from the Cambridge University reprint of the Authorized Version of the English Bible, 1611, Vol. I, in Cambridge English Classics, 1909, pp. 8-29.

it in 72. dayes; neither were we barred or hindered from going ouer it againe, hauing once done it, . . None of these things: the worke hath not bene hudled vp in 72. dayes, but hath cost the workemen, as light as it seemeth, the paines of twise seuen times seuentie two dayes and more: matters of such weight and consequences are to bee speeded with maturitie: for in a businesse of moment a man feareth not the blame of conuenient slacknesse. . . Neither did we disdain to reuise that which we hade done, and to bring backe to the anuill that which we had hammered: but hauing and vsing as great helps as were needfull, and fearing no reproch for slownesse, nor coueting praise for expedition, wee haue at the length, through the good hand of the Lord vpon vs, brought the worke to that passe that you see.

*Their reasons
for putting
variant render-
ings in the
margin: their
liberal-minded-
ness.*

Some peraduenture would haue no varietie of sences to be set in the margine, lest the authoritie of the Scriptures for deciding of controuersies by that shew of vncertaintie, should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their iudgmēt not to be so sound in this point. . . It hath pleased God in his diuine prouidence, heere and there to scatter wordes and sentences of that difficultie and doubtfulnessse, not in doctrinall points that concerne saluation, (for in such it hath beene vouched that the Scriptures are plaine) but in matters of lesse moment, that fearefulnessse would better beseeme vs than confidence, and if we will resolue, to resolue vpon modestie with S. Augustine (though not in this same case altogether, yet vpon the same ground) *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis*, it is better to make doubt of those things which are secret, then to striue about those things that are vncertaine. There be many words in the Scriptures, which be neuer found there but once, (hauing neither brother nor neighbour, as the Hebrews speake) so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. . . Now in such a case, doth not a margine do well to admonish the Reader to seeke further, and not to conclude or dogmatize vpon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulitie, to doubt of those things that are euidēt: so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left (euen in the iudgment of the iudicious) questionable, can be

no lesse then presumption. Therefore as S. Augustine saith, that varietie of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diuersitie of signification and sense in the margine, where the text is not so cleare, must needes do good, yea, is necessary, as we are perswaded.

An other thing we thinke good to admonish thee of (gentle Reader) that wee haue not tyed our selues to an vniformitie of phrasing, or to an identitie of words, as some peraduenture would wish that we had done, because they obserue, that some learned men some where, haue beene as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not varie from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places (for there bee some wordes that bee not of the same sense euery where) we were especially careful, and made a conscience, according to our duetie. But, that we should expresse the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the Hebrew or Greeke word once by Purpose, neuer to call it Intent; if one where Iourneying, neuer Traueiling; if one where Thinke, neuer Suppose; if one where Paine, neuer Ache; if one where Ioy, neuer Gladnesse, &c. Thus to minse the matter, wee thought to sauour more of curiositie then wisdom, and that rather it would breede scorne in the Atheist, then bring profite to the godly Reader. For is the kingdome of God become words or syllables? why should wee be in bondage to them if we may be free, vse one precisely when wee may vse another no lesse fit, as commodiously? . . Lastly, wee haue on the one side auoided the scrupulositie of the Puritanes, . . as also on the other side we haue shunned the obscuritie of the Papists. . . But we desire that the Scripture may speak like it selfe, as in the language of Canaan, that it may bee vnderstood euen of the very vulgar.

Their reasons for variety of phrasing, avoiding the dangers of both Puritans and Papists: not literalists, not slaves to their rules.

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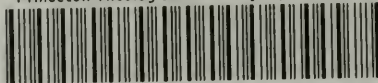
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